The Behr Tree

BY

ARNOLD LEVY

A genealogical survey of the growth of the family tree in the period 1683-1949

With family charts and reproductions of portraits

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(1683 - 1949)

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THE BEHR TREE

(1683—1949)

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

How Britain Lives
(1942)

Inside Britain To-day
(1943)

This I Recall
(1939-1945)

To my nephews and nieces and
their descendants
And to my cousins and their
descendants.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

Two of my nephews have been most helpful in the preparation of this book. Ben Levy, A.C.A. has checked and corrected the manuscript, and Samuel I. Levy prepared the family charts which will be found at the end of the chapters. To both I am most grateful and to Julius Klein I am equally grateful for reading the proofs.

A.L.

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FOREWORD.

The writing of these short family biographies fulfils a long made promise and is a labour of love.

It will be noticed that my beloved Aunt Dvore Hinde has been given the " Lion's Share " in the biographies; there are good reasons for this.

I promised my cousins in New York that I would write about their mother, whom, except for my parents, I knew better than any of my relatives of her generation. When I reached New York in 1907, Dvore Hinde welcomed me to her home with the warmth and affection of a mother, and at once made of me a friend and confidant.

I am named after her father, Wolf Charles, a man whom she loved dearly and whose memory she worshipped. In talking to me she had the feeling that she was closer to her father. From the many long and intimate talks with her, I gleaned a great deal of family background which now forms part of this biography.

When I returned to England in 1919, I had frequent (not enough, unfortunately) and intimate talks with our late cousin, that dearly beloved soul, Rabbi Mendel Yitzchak Behrman of pious memory. From him I gleaned most of the information about the founder of the House—Behr—and the three that followed him, Shmere, Moushe and Gershon.

Rabbi Behrman rightly advised that copies should be obtained from the " Pinkas ", communal minutes, of Krottingen. When I was in Krottingen in 1923 I tried to do this. Several old family friends to whom I explained my requirements promised to help in that direction; meanwhile, they passed away.

Of direct descent in Krottingen there was only Sophy (Zipe), Aaron Hirsh's daughter; the only male descendant was her son Aaron, who was a student at Strasbourg University, France. Though he was home on vacation during my visit, he did not appear to be particularly interested in the project.

Had I possessed copies of the " Pinkas ", I would have been able to give exact ages, and dates of births and deaths.

I have mentioned that I gleaned information from Dvore Hinde and Rabbi Mendel Yitzchak Behrman. Let me not forget that much

of the information I gathered from my beloved parents, Gershon and Esther Reiche Levy. My mother especially was a mine of information; her own mother, Zipe, was of the family, and from her she heard a great deal which she related to me in detail. My mother possessed a remarkably retentive memory.

In September, 1947 my younger brother, Leib, passed away very suddenly at a comparatively early age. He was accepted as a " Lamden " among " Lomdim ". He had studied in Yeshivas (Talmudic Academies) in Europe for many years, in the course of which he met many people who knew the family and its background; from him also I gathered a great deal of information. But for his death, which left a painful gap, this family biography would have been more complete.

I hope the family will find this work interesting. I also hope that one day in the future some member will likewise find pleasure in continuing the subject, and for that purpose blank memoranda pages have been provided after every chapter.

For the benefit of my nephews and nieces and their descendants, I have devoted chapter 26 to my paternal side. My late brother Leib was learned and scholarly and not being of his level in that direction, I asked his friend, Mr. L. Skolsky, learned and scholarly like my brother, whom he knew intimately, to write an appreciation. This appreciation, in Hebrew, I have reproduced in the original writing, for content apart, I consider the Pen-Craft a work of art.

The family charts which accompany this book may not, like the book itself, include ' everyone ' of the family, that fault, however, can only be attributed to lack of available information.

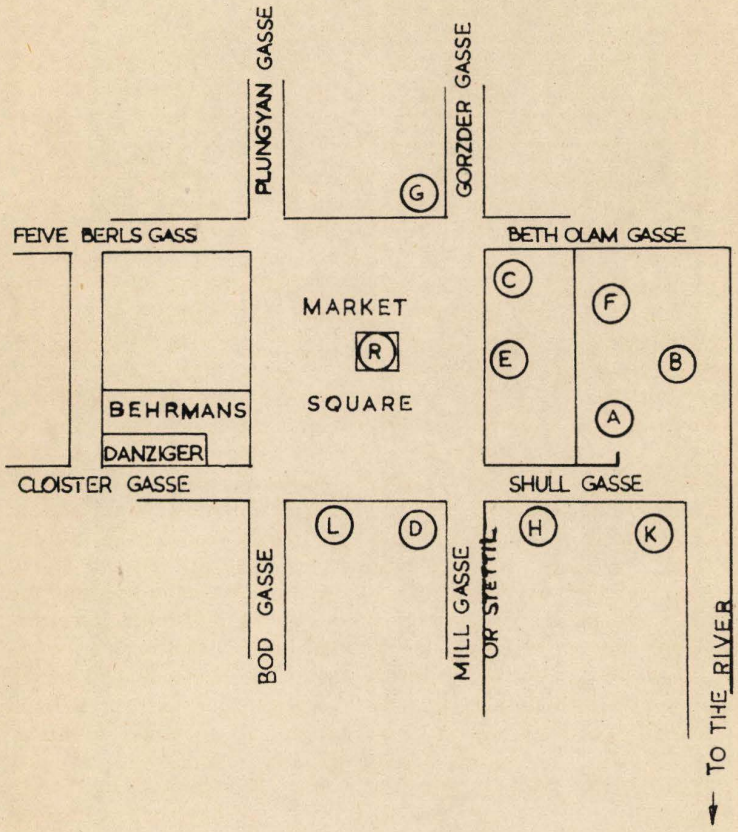
I wish to express my gratitude to all who have helped me in gathering information, especially to my cousin Annie Friedman (Chane Feigel Behrman) of New York and to my cousin and dear friend " Abba ", Abe Berman of Glasgow. Finally to my dear cousin Kreine (Mrs. Charles Behrman) of Johannesburg, South Africa; without her help this story would not have been complete.

Arnold Levy.

Hindhead, Surrey, England.
July, 1949.

KROTINGEN LITHUANIA

(CIRCA 1900)



A BETH HAMEDRASH
B SHULL
C BARRACKS
D CUSTOMS HOUSE
E APOTHECARY
F KLAUZ
G GERMAN CHURCH
R RUSSIAN CHURCH
H THE RAV
K THE DAYAN
L MILITARY HOSPITAL

DATES.

Elsewhere mention is made that exact dates are unfortunately not available; sufficient data, nevertheless, are recorded to provide some evidence for the dates given.

The first three, namely, Behr, Shmere and Moushe, do not, on the face of this record, appear to have branched out very much, yet it is possible that each had many children. The Krottingen " Pinkas ", however, only made mention of the head of the house, or the immediate successor.

It should also be stated that the successor need not necessarily have been the first born; there may, for example, have been daughters.

The following suggestions for dates are the nearest:

Behr Drucker-Behrman	Born, probably in		1683
Shmere Behrman	„	„	„ 1715
Moushe Behrman	„	„	„ 1743
Gershon Behrman	„	„	„ 1774
Wolf Charles Behrman	„		„ 1808
Shmere (Gershons) Behrman	„		„ 1817
Zipe Behrman	„		„ 1831
Moushe Avrohom Behrman	„		„ 1833
Golde (Welfes) Behrman	„	„	„ 1835
Shmuel Gershon Behrman	„	„	„ 1837
Aaron Hirsh Behrman	„	„	„ 1839
Yankel Behrman	„		„ 1841
Dvore Hinde Jacobson	„		„ 1846
Gershon (Shmeres) Behrman	„		„ 1850
Samuel (Shmeres) Behrman	„		„ 1859
Lazar Behrman.	„		„ 1858
Esther Reiche Levy	„		„ 1860

Behr Drucker of Danzig was the founder of the Behrman family in Krottingen, Lithuania. He settled in that town in the year 1723.

In the following pages an attempt is made to bring up to date the numerous branches of the " Behr Tree ".

ויתילדו על משפחתם לבית אבתם:

במדבר א.יח.

" And they declared their pedigrees after their families "

Numbers 1-18

THE BEHR TREE

1

DANZIG.

The origin of Danzig is unknown, but in the year 907 it is mentioned as an important town.

The King of Poland took it from the Teutonic Knights in the year 1455. It continued, however, to enjoy the rights of a FREE CITY. Not until 1774 was it taken from the Poles by the Russians and Saxons. In 1723, therefore, Danzig was under Polish rule.

Due to its geographical situation at the mouth of the Vistula, Danzig was from its earliest days a very important, and up to a point, a very cosmopolitan city. In the 17th and 18th centuries it certainly was a very important trading centre. Though in these centuries it suffered from wars, it nevertheless continued to be prosperous; the prosperity was no doubt largely due to the fact that the local merchants and shipowners, as well as shipbuilders, were able to trade far and wide.

JEWS IN DANZIG.

The oldest document concerning the Jews in Danzig is a charter of King Casimir authorising two Jews, Zub and Michael, to trade in Prussia. This document bears the date of 1476. Jews undoubtedly lived in Danzig in the preceding century. For example, it is known that many of the local merchants and shipowners made use of Jews as translators of letters and shipping documents. Also, it is known that Kosher Wine was obtainable in Danzig prior to 1476. The authorities, however, took no official notice of the Jews until about this period. From this time onwards the Danzig Jewish Community appears to have grown and by 1723 it was both prosperous and substantial.*

DRUCKER.

Surnames were practically unknown to Ashkenazim (German-Polish Jews as apart from Sephardim, Spanish-Portuguese Jews) in

* Jewish Encyclopedia and Encyclopaedia Britannica.

the early 18th century; these only became general in the latter part of that century. Up to then, Ashkenazi Jews were known by their given name, plus that of their father, as, for example, " Menashe Ben Israel " or by their trades or professions, such as " Mordechai the Doctor ", or " Chaim the Shoemaker ". It is known that in Danzig, Behr carried on the trade of printer. The language in use in Danzig, even under the Poles, was German, most of the merchants and shipowners being of German stock. It follows, therefore, that Behr would be known as " Drucker ", that being the German for printer.

2

BEHR DRUCKER IN DANZIG.

The communal records which up to 1939 existed in Krottingen, Lithuania, showed that Behr Drucker came to that town from Danzig in the year 1723. The records further mentioned that in Danzig, Behr followed the trades of printing, publishing, and dealing in silver ornaments for Synagogical requirements. Nothing very definite is known of Behr's antecedents. It is safe to speculate, however, that he was descended from the Druckers of Amsterdam.

The Hebrew printing trade in Central Europe was established in Prague in 1513 by Gershon Ben Solomon Cohen. Between 1627 and 1732 Amsterdam became the centre of Hebrew presses. One of the best known of the successful printers and publishers in Amsterdam between 1680 and 1724 was Chaim Ben Yankov Drucker,* the author of " Leb Chakomim ". He had two sons. Behr was probably a nephew or younger brother and was no doubt apprenticed to his relative. Behr himself had a younger brother about whom mention will be made later.

Behr's age is not known definitely, though having regard to his activities when he reached Krottingen in 1723, he could not have been more than in the early forties. He had certainly been established in Danzig for some years, since, when he reached Krottingen, he was a man of substance. Danzig in the early 18th century was prosperous; moreover, there were important Jewish Communities in each of the five suburbs of Danzig. The City was not one of the important centres for printing and publishing of Hebrew books, and we are safe in assuming that Behr and his younger brother

* Jewish Encyclopedia.

went to Danzig from Amsterdam in search of fresh fields. Chaim Drucker of Amsterdam had his own sons to succeed him, and being in good circumstances, he probably financed Behr and his brother.

Danzig is well situated geographically for distribution to the then thickly populated Jewish communities which, as yet, had no Hebrew presses, and for that reason it was probably chosen as a suitable City for the establishing of a printing centre. Wilna and Warsaw, which later became great centres of printing and publishing, had not, according to " The Jewish Encyclopedia ", any Hebrew presses until 1732.

The reasons that prompted Behr to emigrate from Danzig are understandable. In the year 1723 the Bishop of Danzig announced that his efforts to convert the Jews to Christianity had failed and he incited the masses against the Jews. This resulted in plundering and pogroms.

The sea traffic between Danzig and Memel was frequent, and the voyage only a matter of a day or two. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that when Behr heard of the Bishop's sermon he quickly gathered together his family and his valuables and took the first ship out, leaving his brother Moushe to wind up the business.

3

BEHR DRUCKER IN KROTTINGEN.

There is not, at the time of writing, a single Jew or Jewess alive in Krottingen or in the neighbouring towns of Dorbyan, Salant, Skud, Pollangen, Plungyan, or Gorzd. The Nazis, with the help of the Lithuanians, massacred them all. In 1723, however, there were in all these towns, and Krottingen especially, important Jewish Communities. The reason for the importance of Krottingen as a centre of trade and commerce is that it is situated within three miles of the German border, and was until 1914 the centre of the Import-Export trade for the whole region.

It may well be asked why Behr did not settle in the much larger and important town of Memel in Germany which is only some eighteen miles from Krottingen. The answer is that Jews were not permitted to trade in Memel until 1812.

The Lithuanian population was chiefly agricultural. Trade and commerce were carried on by Jews and Germans. The language used in trade and commerce was German. Not until 1793, when the

Lithuanians became subjects of Russia, did the Russian language infiltrate.

In early documents that existed in Krottingen up to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, Behr is referred to as " Behr Drucker "; later documents mentioned him as " der Mann Behr ". In all documents, however, relating to Behr's son Shmere, the surname of Behrman was used.

The transformation from Drucker to Behrman is also understandable in a German speaking trading community like Krottingen. To the Jewish Community he was probably " Reb Behr ", and to his German business friends he became " der Mann Behr ". Moreover, he was no longer a printer, having at once engaged himself in export-import and currency exchange; the name Drucker, therefore, had no place in his new surroundings.

The late Rabbi Mendel Yitzchak Behrman, of pious memory, told the author that, according to early records, Behr's first appearance in Krottingen was as " Moucher Sforim ", i.e., bookseller. From this we are safe in assuming that the bulk of Behr's fortune when he reached Krottingen, apart from cash, was in books and silverware for Jewish ceremonial occasions; these constituted the stock-in-trade of a " Moucher Sforim " in those days, as in fact, they do to-day.

Behr presumably continued this trade until the arrival of his brother Moushe in Krottingen; meanwhile Behr had had a taste of the more profitable business of exchange brokerage, and upon Moushe's arrival Behr transferred to him the books as well as the silver articles required for religious purposes, and himself continued as exchange broker.

Behr, it appears, was the printer, publisher and man of business, whereas Moushe was a craftsman in the type of silverware that is used on religious occasions.

4

DANZIGERS.

The early Krottingen records mentioning Moushe, Behr's brother, spoke of him as " der Danziger ". Presumably he reached Krottingen much later than Behr, by which time Behr had ceased to be known as " Drucker ". Consequently, Moushe became known as " der Danziger ". The literal German translation of this is " from

Danzig". The two families, Behrmans and Danzigers, lived next door to each other for something like 216 years; Moushe continued to trade in jewellery and silver.

About the year 1820, Yude Danziger, probably a great-great grandson of Moushe, married Reiche, daughter of Moushe Behrman, 'Hakodesh', (see Chapter 7). Thus the Behrman and Danziger families, after one hundred years, once again became closely linked.

Yude and Reiche had two sons, Moushe and Mordecai, known as Mote. Yude must have been, as were his two sons, of small stature since he was always spoken of as 'Yudelle'. Like his forefathers, Yude continued as the town silversmith and jeweller. When his sons married he divided his property between them, and both continued in the same trade. After the passing of their parents, there sprung up a great business rivalry between the two brothers who were situated next to each other; this rift in the family was carried to the third generation remaining in Krottingen.

Moushe Danziger, elder son of Yude and Reiche, married Seine who was known as 'Seine Yudelles'. Seine lived to a great age. When the author visited Krottingen in 1923, he had a long conversation with her. Moushe and Seine also had two sons, Chatze Behr, known as Bernard, and Yude known as Julius.

Bernard and Julius Danziger. Bernard first and Julius later, emigrated to South Africa and established themselves in the family trade of silver and jewellery.

At the time of writing, the descendants of Bernard and Julius, are wholesale warehousemen of silver and jewellery in Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa.

Mordecai, or Mote Danziger, had three children. Shmuel, Mindel, or Minnie, and Reiche.

Reiche Danziger died in Krottingen unmarried.

Shmuel Danziger was the last of the family to carry on the trade of his ancestors, on the same spot, right up to the advent of Hitler in 1940. Unfortunately, Shmuel, his wife and family were victims of the Nazis.

Mindel or Minnie married Ben Zion Hackner of Wilna and emigrated to England where their descendants now reside. They left two sons and two daughters; these are

Miriam married to Abraham Solomon.
Esther married to Nathan Berg.
Max Hackner, unmarried.
Simon Hackner married to Lena Cohen, they have two sons.
Bernard Hackner.
David Hackner.

5

THE HOUSE.

The original house which Behr built, was like the Danziger house next door, a single story structure of loam and brick white-washed on the outside, not unlike a North Country small farm house in appearance.

The house which we knew and in which generations of the family were born, including the author, was built in the early part of the nineteenth century by Gershon Behrman.

Visiting this house in 1923, one could only come to the conclusion that the man who conceived it possessed outstanding imagination, good taste and wealth. The description best suited for the house would be " Manor ", or " Stately Dwelling ".

It is built entirely of stone, fortress-like, and is enclosed on the sides and the rear by an eight foot stone wall with huge wooden gates such as one finds in ancient castles.

In the centre of the cobbled yard there was a deep water well and on the sides were outbuildings of stone. These were for stabling, a carriage house, an ice house (ice was cut from the lake in the winter, stored between sawdust, and lasted until the next winter), a store house for fire logs and peat, and a grain store.

The house itself is a two and a half storey building, having a large entrance hall and spacious rooms with high ceilings. The door on the right of the entrance hall led to the business offices; the rest of the house was devoted to living quarters. Only inside the house where one sees the width of the window sills does one realise the thickness of the walls. Being close to the border the house was obviously intended to withstand siege.

During the 1914-1918 war Krottingen was occupied at different times by both the Russians and the Germans, and both used the house as their headquarters, it being the principal building in the district.



HOUSE IN KROTTINGEN

This photograph was taken in 1923 by Samuel Jacobs, brother-in-law of the Author. Reading from left to right are, the Author, his cousin Sophy (Zipe), her husband Hessel Levy, their daughter Minnie, Mrs. Arnold Levy, wife of the Author, and Aaron, the son of Sophy and Hessel. Aaron and Minnie were the ninth generation in direct line to be in occupation of the house

6

THE BUSINESS.

Behr's first business was that of currency and foreign exchange brokerage. The Germans paid for their purchases in the coin of their realm, whereas the Lithuanians wished to be paid in their own currency. " Exchange ", therefore, was doubtless a profitable business. That was the beginning of Behr's business. Later he began acting as Agent for the export and import of the merchants from both sides of the border. Later still, he assumed the title of " Expeditor " (Forwarding Agent and Custom House Broker), advancing money also to clients for the payment of freight and custom duty. This profession was carried on from Behr's house by his descendants right up to 1939.

7

DESCENDANTS.

Shmere, the son of Behr, succeeded to the house and the business. In communal records he was spoken of as a man of learning, piety, a leader of communal affairs, and a respected and successful man of business. He was followed by his son Moushe.

Moushe succeeded his father. Apparently, in Moushe's day the banking side of the business had become important. Money was advanced to the landowners and nobility of the district, and an option on the succeeding year's flax and flaxseed crops was taken.

He was well known as a man possessing great wealth, and since cheques, or bankers drafts, were as yet unknown, he usually carried on his person what was then a vast amount of gold currency. This was probably well known to many. He was often warned by his friends not to ride without an escort, but he was a powerfully built man and made light of the warnings. On one of those rides he was murdered and robbed.

In communal records he was spoken of as " Hakodesh ", the holy one. Moushe may have left a number of sons, we however, possess a record of only two, namely Gershon and Shmere. Gershon succeeded his father to the business.

He also left a daughter, Reiche by name, who, as previously mentioned, married Yude Danziger.

8

GERSHON BEHRMAN

Not until Gershon is reached do there appear records wherein details of the business of the house are given. From Gershon too, the branches of the Behrman family began to develop, the records of this being almost complete.

Gershon was undoubtedly an outstanding personality in every respect. He was a communal leader, learned and pious, as well as a successful man of business, and employed the most eminent men as teachers for the religious and secular education of his children.

During his lifetime, Lithuania was annexed to Russia and the Krottingen Custom House became one of the very important ones in the Kovno Province. Gershon became a fully licenced " Expeditor "; only an expeditor's certificate enabled one to import and export.

Gershon built up a great clientele from far and wide. At the same time, he established on his own account business relations with the North of England from where he imported millstones and agricultural implements which were in great demand. Though very pious, Gershon's household had, by local standards, become very cosmopolitan. This, no doubt, was due to the numerous clients, Russians and Germans, that visited the house.

Though Behr is the actual founder of the House of Behrman at Krottingen, it was Gershon who laid the real foundation. From him sprang branches of the family eminent in learning, piety and culture.

Little is known of his intimate life, yet one is safe to describe Gershon as an outstanding man, if only to judge him by the eminent men he chose as husbands for his daughters.

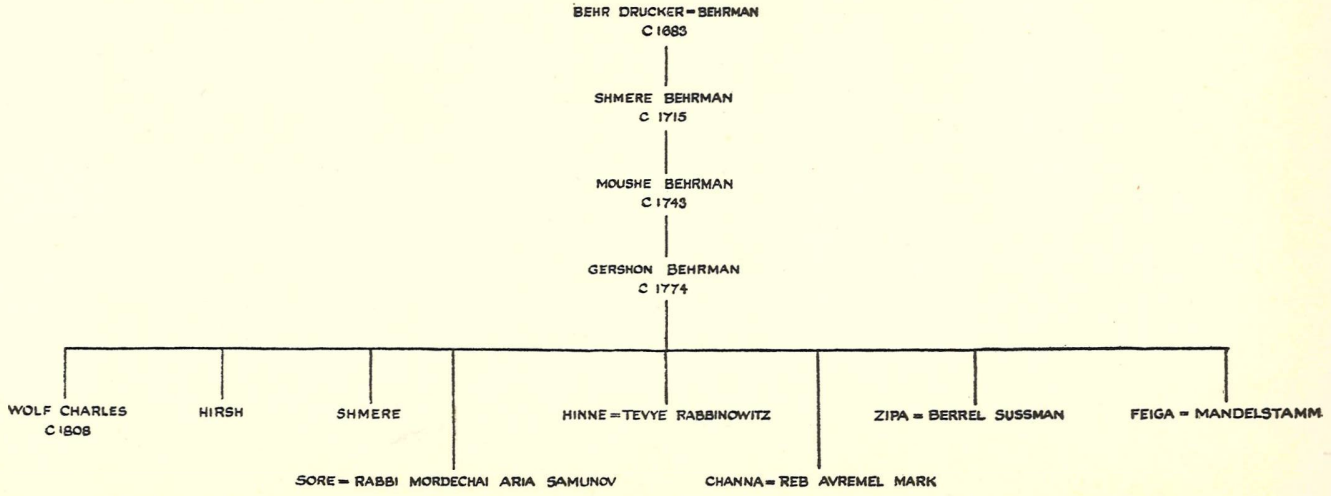
The eminent Rabbi, Elijah Aaron Milekovsky-Samunov, who in his latter years was Dayan of Tel Aviv, and the author of, among other publications, " Dvar Eliyohu ", in that book refers to Gershon, who was his grandfather (his mother was Sore, Gershon's daughter) as a man of wealth, and eminent in charity and goodness.

A grandfather clock made by Thomas of Kendal, Westmoreland, which Gershon imported, was still keeping good time in 1923.

The library of the house was panelled in mahogany by Gershon. This, likewise, looked perfect in 1923.

Exact dates of births and deaths, so important in any biography,

CHAPTER 8


BEHR DRUCKER = BEHRMAN
C 1683
SHMERE BEHRMAN
C 1715
MOUSHE BEHRMAN
C 1743
GERSHON BEHRMAN
C 1774
WOLF CHARLES
C 1808
HIRSH
SHMERE
SORE = RABBI MORDECHAI ARIA SAMUNOV
HINNE = TEVYE RABBINOWITZ
CHANNA = REB AVREMEL MARK
ZIPA = BERREL SUSSMAN
FEIGA = MANDELSTAMM

are unfortunately not available. It may be assumed, however, that Gershon died in the middle of the eighteen forties. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Wolf Charles.

Gershon's family consisted of eight children, three sons and five daughters.

The sons —Wolf Charles (first wife Minnie, second wife Zipe).
Hirsh.
Shmere (wife Reise).

The daughters —Sore, married Rabbi Mordecai Ariya Samunov.
Hinne, married Tevye Rabinowitz.
Channa, married Reb Avremel Mark.
Zipe, married Berrel Sussman.
Feige, married Mr. Mandelstamm of Zager.

9

WOLF CHARLES BEHRMAN.

Gershon left eight children of whom Wolf Charles, the oldest, succeeded to his father's house and business. He was known locally, firstly as " Welfe Gershons ", and after the death of his father, as " Reb Welfe Gershons ".

First hand stories about him are numerous. Those that are best remembered are about his charities, given chiefly anonymously.

His grandson, the late Rabbi Mendel Yitzchak Behrman of pious memory, pointed out that in local communal documents Wolf Charles is frequently referred to as the " intellectual ".

Wolf Charles assumed the mantle of his father with ease, and carried on in the grand and traditional manner of his ancestors. Like his father before him, he educated his children privately, employing well known educationalists of the day. He was famed for his goodness of heart and for the hospitality of his house.

Upon the death of his father he assumed the local communal leadership. Soon after he was appointed by the Russian Government as the official representative of the Jewish Community of the region, embracing Krottingen.

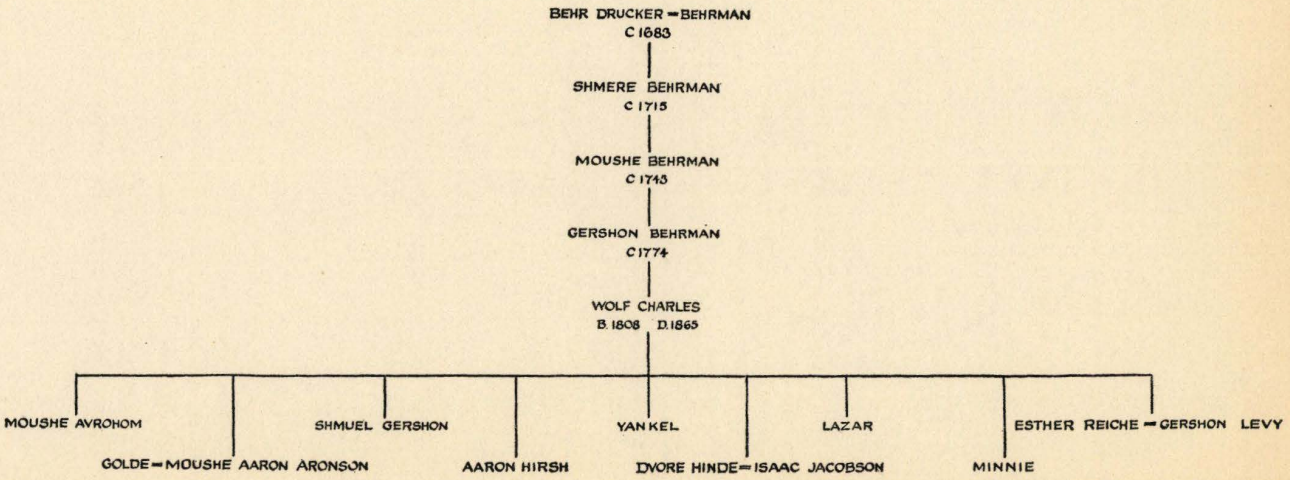
Wolf Charles was married twice. Firstly, to Minnie; she bore him six children—Moushe Avrohom, Golde, Shmuel Gershon, Aaron Hirsh, Yankel and Dvore Hinde. His second wife was his sister's daughter Zipe; she bore him three children—Minnie (who died in girlhood), Lazar and Esther Reiche. The older five of his children from his first marriage were all married when he died.

Greatness is usually conceded to those who leave behind them great works, or make great conquests or launch great and liberating ideas. Wolf Charles did none of these. He was, however, great of courage and of unsparing devotion to the cause of bettering the conditions of his fellow Jews. To this he devoted his fine abilities, his strength, his energy and a good deal of his fortune.

In his time, the Jews of the Telz region in which Krottingen was situated, probably received better treatment from the authorities than the Jews of other regions in the Kovno Government.

This was no doubt due to the efforts of two men from Krottingen, Wolf Charles Behrman and his contemporary and great friend, the

CHAPTER 9


BEHR DRUCKER = BEHRMAN
C 1683
SHMERE BEHRMAN
C 1715
MOUSHE BEHRMAN
C 1743
GERSHON BEHRMAN
C 1774
WOLF CHARLES
B. 1808 D. 1865
MOUSHE AVROHOM
GOLDE = MOUSHE AARON ARONSON
SHMUEL GERSHON
AARON HIRSH
YANKEL
DVORE HINDE = ISAAC JACOBSON
LAZAR
MINNIE
ESTHER REICHE = GERSHON LEVY

eminent Elijah Levenson,* banker, statesman, scholar and man of great learning and piety.

Quite apart from the influence these men wielded in high quarters, by their mode of life and methods of business, they set a fine example to their fellow citizens.

Also, as a result of their reputation, Krottingen was always able to secure outstanding personalities as Rabbis. The Rav remembered by the author and his generation is Rabbi Leibzig Lipkin, eminent Talmudist, mathematician and astronomer.

The leadership of these two men was unquestioned; their successors in the leadership unfortunately, never quite reached their eminence or loftiness.

Even in 1923, sixty years after his death, stories were being told about Wolf Charles' efforts to alleviate the sufferings of his fellow Jews as if they had happened yesterday. One of them is in connection with the neighbouring town of Plungyan. Prince Agintzky, an illegitimate son of the Czar, owned vast estates in the neighbourhood and was ground landlord of Plungyan. He ruled the district with an iron hand. With his Jewish subjects, who were considerable in number, he was a Hitler.

The Prince issued an edict that a church should be constructed and Jewish labour conscribed for that purpose. The consternation among the Jewish populace can well be imagined. The Rabbi ordered a day of Fasting, and the town went into mourning.

An appeal was sent to Wolf Charles; he responded at once, and at the risk of his life went to see the Prince. Undoubtedly Wolf Charles' powers of persuasion were great, because he succeeded in having the edict cancelled and thus saved the Jewish population from years of enforced slavery.

His goodness of heart is best illustrated by the following story—

An old friend whom he had not seen for years, arrived with a pair of starving horses that could hardly stand on their legs, and a broken-down carriage. The stable-man received orders to feed and look after the horses, and the man himself was received as an old friend and was given hospitality in the house. Wolf Charles expected, no doubt, that the man would ask for help. Nothing

* Reb Elye Krottinger.

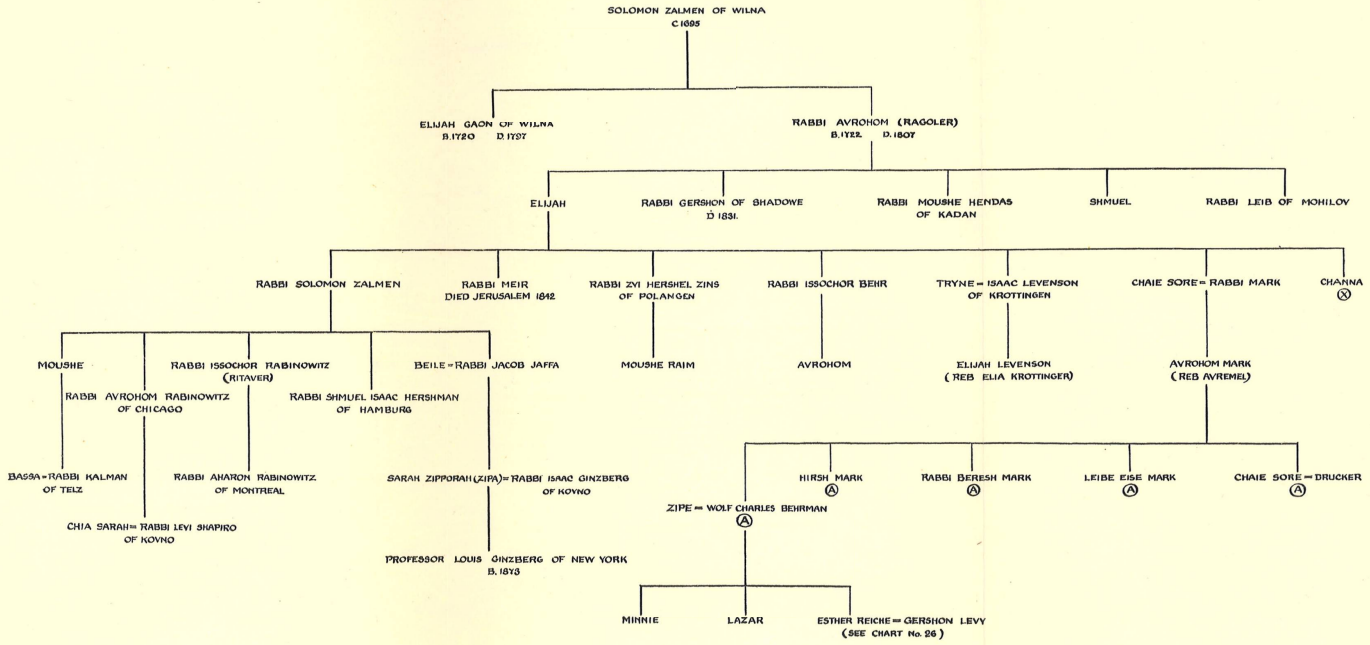
happened during dinner nor after a long conversation after dinner; finally they retired for the night. Early next morning the stable-man knocked on the door of Wolf Charles' room. " Master, Master ", he said, " the guest has hitched up our best horses to our good carriage and is driving away. What shall I do?" The answer came, " Don't disturb him. He is in a hurry to get home and he obviously cannot do it as quickly with his own horses ".

He wore himself out in the service of the community, and died in 1865 at the age of 57.

As mentioned earlier, Wolf Charles left nine children; Minnie, however, died in girlhood.

Moushe Avrohom, married Hannah.
Golde, married Moushe Aaron Aronson.
Shmuel Gershon, married his cousin Rivke Samunov.
Aaron Hirsh, married Simche Esther Caplan.
Yankel, married Seine Masse Lapin.
Dvore Hinde, married Isaac Jacobson.
Lazar, married Rivke.
Esther Reiche, married Gershon Levy.

CHAPTER 10



(A) SEE CHART Nº 29

(X) NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE



ZIPE BEHRMAN, second wife of Wolf Charles Behrman, grandmother of the Author. (Mother of Minnie, Lazar and Esther Reiche Levy)
(*Circa* 1892)

10

ZIPE BEHRMAN.

Minnie, the first wife of Wolf Charles died in the year 1853; her maiden name was Naftalin. There is no-one living who can tell us much about her; we know, however, that she was a loving wife and the mother of six children. Fortunately there are still a few who knew that saintly soul, Zipe, the second wife of Wolf Charles.

Zipe was the daughter of Reb Avremel Mark and his wife Channa. Her father was of Gaonic stock. At the early age of eighteen she married a Rabbinic student of a well known Kovno family. At the age of twenty she was already a widow with a child. The child died in infancy. Shortly before that period, her uncle, Wolf Charles of Krottingen, the brother of her mother, lost his wife and was left with six children; the oldest, Moushe, was, in fact, two years older than his cousin Zipe. Her uncle journeyed to Kovno and proposed marriage. She was not at all enthusiastic at the proposal; such, however, were his persuasive powers and personality that, much against her better judgment, she acquiesced. At the time of her second marriage she was twenty-one; her husband was at least twenty-three years her senior.

She was his loving wife for some twelve years when she was left a widow with three children; she was then only in the middle thirties. Zipe was sweet of temper, and good looking even past middle age. She had many offers of marriage but remained the widow of Wolf Charles for something like thirty years.

Zipe suffered much, but she never complained. She died in the middle eighteen nineties at Krottingen, a gentle soul beloved by all.

Elsewhere, mention is made that Zipe Behrman was descended from the family of the Gaon of Wilna.

Details of this will be found on Chart No. 10.

In a recent American Edition of " MA'ALOTH HA'TORAH " (Avrohom Ben Solomon Ragoler, 1722-1806), Professor Louis Ginzberg of New York, himself a descendant, contributed a foreword; in it he traces a great many of the family hitherto unknown to the author and now included in Chart No. 10. The author, therefore, acknowledges his indebtedness to the Professor.

11

MOUSHE AVROHOM BEHRMAN.

Moushe Avrohom was the first son of Wolf Charles and his first wife Minnie. He married Hannah, a stately lady of Rabbinic family. Hannah bore him six children—three sons and three daughters, Ore Hesse (not to be confused with Ore Hirshe), Mendel Yitzchak and Michael, and three daughters, Dvore Hinde (not to be confused with the " Aunt " Dvore Hinde), Seite and Esther Chianne.

Moushe Avrohom was born about 1833. At his father's death, which was about 1865, he succeeded to the communal leadership. He was a man of learning, piety and of good business sense. The exact date of his death is not certain; in all probability it was in the late eighteen eighties.

His wife, Hannah, lived to a ripe old age.

Ore Hesse was an outstandingly handsome man, tall, and of fine figure, with a short square beard, and magnificent features. He was everywhere the centre of attraction. He possessed a fine intellect and a splendid business acumen. After he married he removed to Odessa where he was engaged in the wheat and grain business. He died in the nineteen-twenties. Nothing has been heard from his two daughters, Minnie and Esther, since 1939.

Dvore Hinde, like her aunt and namesake, was a noted beauty, and a woman of culture. She married Mr. Leibsig Gordon, a practising lawyer, who was very successful. They were much in love and very happy, and lived on a beautiful and comparatively large estate, " Katlovshizne ". Their one daughter, Minnie, was equally beautiful and brilliant. She was seventeen years old when in 1890, at a high school at Kovno, she took ill and died. Dvore Hinde and her husband never quite got over the shock. They lived for some years and devoted their time to helping institutions of learning.

Cousin Kreine (Mrs. Charles Behrman) confirms that Dvore Hinde Gordon was very beautiful, intelligent and cultured.

Kreine recalls a visit to the Gordons in the middle eighteen nineties. Dvore Hinde's study was filled with books, among them the complete works of Bullwer Lytton. The tapestries and Persian rugs in the study rather took Kreine's eye and she remarked upon their beauty, whereupon Dvore Hinde replied " I must have atmosphere ".



RABBI MENDEL YITZCHAK BEHRMAN

This photograph is an enlargment of a "snap" taken by the Author at 52, Tatham Street, Sunderland, in July, 1919

Mendel Yitzchak married a lady from Eshesock, who emanated from a Rabbinic family. Prior to his marriage he studied in the famous Talmudic Academies of Meer and Volozhin. He received his Rabbinic degree at the age of twenty-one.

" Oholey Shem " is a sort of " Who's Who " in the Jewish World. It was written by Gottliel and published in 1912 by H. H. Glabeman.

The following extract is from that book (New York Public Library) translated from the Hebrew.

> " Rabbi Mendel Yitzchak Behrman, son of Reb Moushe Avrohom Behrman was born in the town of Krottingen in the district of Kovno, Lithuania, of a distinguished family.
>
> " He was the great grandson of the famous Reb Gershon Behrman of pious memory, whose sons and sons-in-law were renowned in learning.
>
> " On his mother's side Rabbi Mendel was a grandson of the famous Rabbi Zvi Hirsh of pious memory, known as Reb Hirsh Hannes who lived in the townlet of Yeidy near Kelem, Lithuania. Rabbi Hirsh was well versed in Kabala and of great learning.
>
> " Rabbi Mendel was educated at the Yeshiva in Volozhin and in Eshesock, famous as the ' assembly of scholars '. He received his Rabbinical Diploma from two great and famous Rabbis, the Nazeb and Raphael Shapiro. In 1904 Rabbi Mendel came to England as Rabbi to Grimsby, shortly after he received a call to Gateshead and in 1917 he was appointed Rabbi of Middlesboro' . . . . . "

It should perhaps be explained that " Nazeb " stands for the initials of Rabbi Naftali Zvi Judah Berlin. The " Nazeb " was the son-in-law of Rabbi Isaac Ben Chaim (Reb Chaim himself was a disciple of the Gaon of Wilna and founded Volozhin Yeshiva in 1803).

The " Nazeb " succeeded his father-in-law to the Headship of Volozhin, and was followed in that post by his own son-in-law, Rabbi Raphael Shapiro.

Some years before his death in Manchester, Rabbi Behrman joined the faculty of the Talmudic Academy of that city. He was a saintly soul, very learned and pious. Above all, he was one of the most lovable of men. He loved the companionship of the young in whom he was always interested and to whom he was always ready to listen and render advice. He died in Manchester, England, in 1929. He left five children, two sons and three daughters.

Samuel, (Shmuel Moushe) elder son of Rabbi Mendel Yitzchak Behrman, resides in New Mexico, U.S.A. and is married to Sophie Keidan.

Samuel is a veteran of the 1914-1918 war as well as of the last war in which he was wounded.

In 1918 he was decorated by Marshal Foch with the ' Croix de Guerre ' and by the United States Government with a ' Certificate of Valour ' signed by President Wilson.

Wolf, the second son, resides in Liverpool, England, and has one daughter, Rosaline Ruth.

Annie (Chane Feigel) the eldest daughter is married to Mr. Lou Friedman and they reside in New York, U.S.A. They have one daughter, Miriam, who is married to Mr. Sidney Zuckor. The Zuckors have one son, David Mendel.

Minnie is married to Mr. Louis Arion. They have five children and reside in Leeds, England.

Rivka is married to Mr. Maurice Jaffe, son of the late Rabbi Joseph Jaffe who was known as " Reb Yoselle Gorzder "; they have two children and reside in Manchester, England.

Michael succeeded his father Moushe Avrohom, in the management of the business in Krottingen, but after the death of his sister, Dvore Hinde, he gave up the business and took over his sister's estate, " Katlovshizne ", which was quite considerable. He died in the nineteen twenties. Nothing has been heard of his wife and five children since the outbreak of the war in 1939.

Seite married a Mr. Posnack of Minsk in the eighteen nineties. She died within a few years of her marriage and left a son and daughter of whom nothing has been heard since 1939.

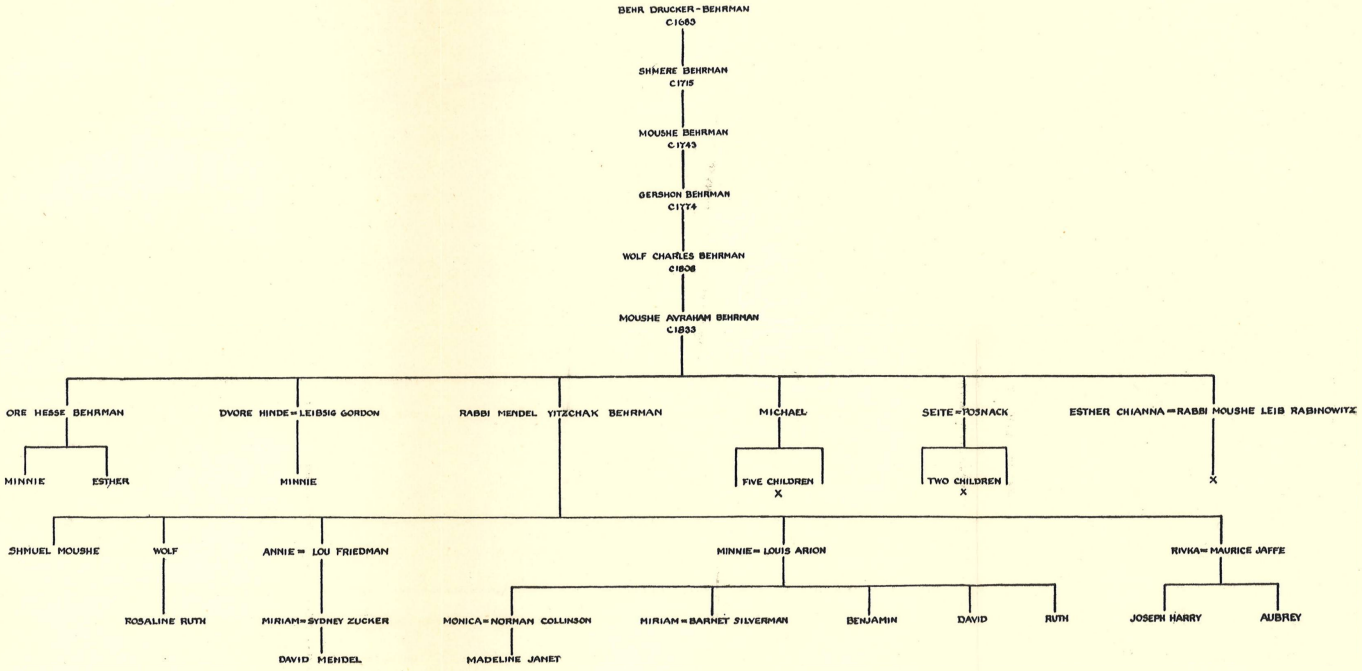
Esther Chianne married Rabbi Moushe Leib Rabinowitz, resides in Baltimore, U.S.A. and has one daughter.

Descendants of Moushe Avrohom Behrman and his wife Hannah.

Ore Hesse, two children.
Minnie.
Esther.

Dvore Hinde (Mrs. Leibsig) Gordon, one child.
Minnie.

CHAPTER 11.



X NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE

Mendel Yitzchak.
- Samuel Moushe (wife Sophie Keidan).
- Wolf, one child.
  - Rosaline Ruth.
- Annie (Mrs. Lou) Friedman, one child.
  - Miriam (Mrs. Sidney) Zuckor, one child.
    - David Mendel.
- Minnie (Mrs. Louis) Arion, five children.
  - Monica (Mrs. Norman) Collinson, one child.
    - Madeline Janet.
  - Miriam (Mrs. Barnet) Silverman.
  - Benjamin Arion.
  - David Arion.
  - Ruth Arion.
- Rivka (Mrs. Maurice) Jaffe, two children.
  - Joseph Harry Jaffe.
  - Aubrey Jaffe.

Michael, five children.

Seite, Mrs. Posnack, two children.

Esther Chianne (Rabbi Moushe Leib) Rabinowitz, one daughter.

12

SHMUEL GERSHON BEHRMAN.

Shmuel Gershon was either the second or third child of Wolf Charles Behrman and his first wife Minnie.

Shmuel Gershon married his cousin, Rivke, daughter of his Aunt Sore and Chief Rabbi Mordecai Ariya Samunov, Rav of Windau, Latvia.

Shmuel Gershon died young and Rivke married, for the second time, a prominent amber manufacturer of Pollangen, Kurland.

Shmuel Gershon and Rivke had four children, three daughters and one son.

Minnie (Mrs. Bernard) Edelstein. (Note—About 1910 the author visited the Edelstein's in Hudson, New York State.)

Doris (Mrs. Max) Weinberg; resided in Windau.

Hinde (Mrs. Abraham) Lebenhaft; resided in Antwerp the early part of this century.

Aaron (wife Gitte Levitan); Johannesburg, South Africa.

George, two sons and one daughter.

David.

Raymond.

Judy.

Joseph.

Sarah.

Minnie Shrock, one daughter.

Renee.

Rose Vogelnest, two sons.

Felix.

Aaron.

Leo, two sons and one daughter.

Gordon.

Arnold.

Maureen.

Rebecca Papert, one daughter.

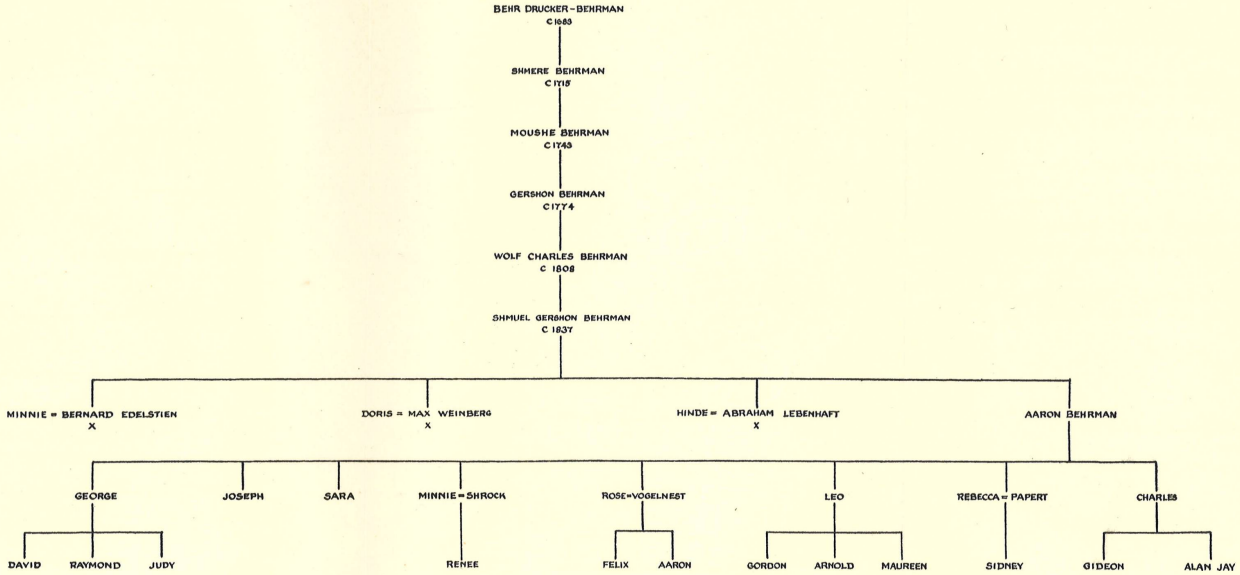
Sidney.

Charles, (wife Sadie Boyarsky) two sons.

Gideon.

Alan Jay.

CHAPTER 12



X NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE

13

GOLDE ARONSON.

Golde was a daughter of Wolf Charles Behrman and his first wife, Minnie. She married the well known Chassidic Rabbi, Moushe Aaron Aronson; they lived in Poland. The Rabbi was known to possess the longest beard in the family.

Golde was ' suspect ' of having embraced Chassidism, because on her first visit to Krottingen after her marriage, she spoke in high praise of the Chassidic way of life ; the family felt very " embarrassed ". It is related that when she was a very young girl, her father used to refer to her as the " Rebbetzin ". Later, when she grew into womanhood her father foretold that she would marry a Rabbi and live in poverty. His prophecy came true.

As one remembers her in the latter part of the last century, she was tall, slightly round shouldered, and had the best part of her forehead covered by a " Sheitel " or " Heibele ", also, she took snuff.

In 1907, one of her sons, Cecil, was engaged in the cigar business in New York; he had an accident and died in that year.

In 1920, Golde's oldest son was a Chassidic Rabbi in Warsaw. His economic circumstances were very bad. He appealed for help to his Aunt Dvore Hinde in New York. She forwarded the appeal to the author who arranged with the American Jewish Relief Association to give him immediate help.

Mr. Edward Rosenbloom of Washington, D.C., was then in charge of American Jewish Relief in Poland, with headquarters at Warsaw. Mr. Rosenbloom promptly called on the Rabbi and seeing the great need of the family, immediately provided food, clothing and ready cash. The latter the Rabbi was most reluctant to accept, even when he was told that it was a gift from a cousin from London.

The Rabbi contended that he knew of no cousin in London by the name of Levy and that these gifts can only be from ' A Mallech fon Himmel ' (an Angel from Heaven).

Mr. Rosenbloom looked after the Rabbi and family until he left Poland in 1921.

Unfortunately, there has been no further news from that side of the family since 1921.

14

AARON HIRSH BEHRMAN

Aaron Hirsh, known in the family as " Ore Hirshe ", was the third son of Wolf Charles and his first wife, Minnie.

He was a handsome looking man of fine personality and strong features; he possessed a good intellect. After the death of his father he took over the management of the business. The leadership of the community did not fall upon him until after the death of his oldest brother, Moushe.

Aaron Hirsh possessed leadership and would, in normal circumstances, undoubtedly have followed, in every way, in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, but fate was unkind to him; the lady he married was of good family and came from a nearby town, but she had little regard for the truth and her name in the family became synonymous with fabrications. Her name was Simche Esther and when anyone in the family told a story the truth of which was in doubt, the usual response was " Don't be a Simche Esther ".

Such was the high moral standing of the family that the mere mention of her name caused a blush, and her husband knew it and suffered greatly. He had sufficient ground for divorce in Jewish law, but meanwhile two children were born to them, also divorce had hitherto not been known to anyone in the family.

He died in Memel while on a business trip. His son, Gershon, had died a few years previously, un-married, at the early age of twenty-four. His daughter, Sophy (Zipe), married Hessel Levy who succeeded to the house and the business. They had two children—Aaron and Minnie. Nothing has been heard of them since the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939.

15

YANKEL BEHRMAN.

Yankel Behrman was the fourth son of Wolf Charles by his first wife, Minnie. In his early manhood he became intimately associated with the famed Reb Elijah Levenson* of Krottingen. He acted as Reb Elijah's secretary for many years; we can take it, therefore, that he was learned and cultured, otherwise he could not have held that post. He married that lovely lady, Seine Masse Lapin.

* Reb Elye Krottinger.



AARON HIRSH BEHRMAN
(*Circa* 1895)

He was a tall, handsome man with a fine figure, black hair, blue eyes and a blonde beard, and he possessed a marvellous sense of humour.

In his marriage Yankel was certainly the most fortunate of men; Seine Masse was an angelic soul, beloved not only by the members of the family, but also by all who knew her. As one remembers her in middle age, she possessed most beautiful features and a sweetness best described as honey. At no time an " in-law "; Seine Masse was a sister and an aunt in the best sense. She died in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Charles Behrman, in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1946. She never divulged her age, but those in a position to know calculated it to be at least a hundred. She retained to the very last all her faculties and sweetness.

Seine Masse and her daughter Kreine were frequently absent from home on visits to the family; during those visits (after Cheder hours) the author became the constant companion of " Fetter Yanke ". Though the author bears the names of his great-grand as well as of his grandfather, to " Fetter Yanke ", nevertheless, he was always " Welfe "; that of course was his own father's name.

At that period, Mendel, the only son of Yankel, was already in South Africa; the author's father was also in South Africa, both obviously missed something, one the companionship of a son, the other of a father; as a consequence, there grew up between the author and his uncle an attachment and companionship such as one finds between a father and a grown-up son. It was in fact more than an attachment, on the part of the author it was a deep love such as one has for a parent.

Yankel and Seine Masse had two children—Mendel, who died unmarried, and Kreine, Mrs. Charles Behrman of Johannesburg, South Africa.

Kreine, besides being a very beautiful woman, had the advantage of a fine education, religious and secular.

It is related of Minnie, Kreine's paternal grandmother, that she was able to read and translate the " Machzor " including the " Pyet "; Kreine is, in that respect, in her grandmother's class.

In her secular education she was fortunate in having tutors who inculcated in her a love for good literature; also during her holidays she was constantly in the company of the " intellectuals " of the family, with the result that she is an educated and cultured lady.

Kreine married her second cousin, Charles Behrman ; their three

children, Jack, Horace and Dorothy are mentioned in detail in the chapter (31) of their paternal grandfather.

This book, or the other books of the author, would probably not have been written, were it not for the early instruction the author received from Kreine.

16

DVORE HINDE.

There were in the family at Krottingen, at the same period in the eighteen fifties, two Dvore Hindes, the aunt and the niece. The aunt was the daughter of Wolf Charles Behrman and his first wife Minnie, whereas the niece was the daughter of Moushe Behrman, himself a son of Wolf Charles and therefore the brother of the aunt Dvore Hinde, the subject of this chapter.

Both Dvore Hindes were about the same age and great friends; they were tall, stately and of great beauty, intellect and intelligence; they were also, certainly for that period and in the town of Krottingen, considered women of good education. As a result of the cosmopolitan atmosphere of their respective homes, they were more worldly than the other young women of Krottingen. It must be made clear, however, that in this chapter, it is the aunt with whom we are concerned. Dvore Hinde was born in 1846, her mother Minnie died when she was very young; her brothers Ore Hirshe and Yankel, her seniors by a few years, made a great fuss of her, they permitted her to play with them and indulge in all sorts of boys' games. She had in fact become, in her own words, a ' Tom Boy '. She attended religious and secular lessons with the boys, went skating on the lake and was always ready for all sorts of tricks such as the boys indulged in.

After her father became a widower, he made Dvore Hinde his chief companion; during these years he indulged her in practically all her whims, and he was in the habit of bringing her the latest and most expensive playthings from Memel, a town he visited frequently.

When her father married his niece Zipe (daughter of his sister) as his second wife, Dvore Hinde was already a ' handful ', to say the least.

On her own admission, Dvore Hinde was a very spoilt child when Zipe came to the house as the wife of her father. Moreover,



YANKEL BEHRMAN, WIFE AND DAUGHTER
(*Circa* 1896)

much of the attention she formerly received from her father he now, quite naturally, transferred to his new and young wife; her dislike for her stepmother therefore, is, in the circumstances, understandable.

As Dvore Hinde grew into womanhood she began to realise that Zipe was a saintly soul and they became very good friends, more especially when her father died suddenly and stepmother and step-daughter were thrown closer together. Meanwhile, Dvore Hinde had resented the intrusion of the children of the second marriage. There were three children, Minnie, Lazar and Esther Reiche. The arrival of these children deprived Dvore Hinde of the premier place she had held as the youngest female of the house.

Dvore Hinde had grown into a vivacious, beautiful and worldly young woman before her father's sudden death in 1863, with the result that numerous " shadchonim ", professional match makers, came with proposals from young men in the district as well as from far afield. A proposal through a " shadchan " was the custom of that period. Her father, however, turned down all of them ; he was looking for a son-in-law who would fit into the picture of his house and the family which had already become famed for piety, charity and above all, learning, also one who was able to give this beautiful and gifted daughter of his a home similar to that which she was accustomed.

His first daughter, Golde, he married to a famed Chassidic Rabbi ; this atmosphere suited Golde who was ultra pious (incidentally, she took snuff!) Not so Dvore Hinde; piety yes, but with it worldly comforts. Her father's own sisters married men who were already famed for their learning and piety. His sister Sore married the famed Rabbi Mordecai Ariya Samunov and the other sister married Reb Avremel Mark, a direct descendant of the brother of Elijah Gaon of Wilna and himself noted for his learning and piety. How then could Wolf Charles consider a lesser personality for his daughter Dvore Hinde?

In the midst of this picking and choosing the poor man died, and she was left, at the age of 17, with her brothers and stepmother to guide her.

17

Among Dvore Hinde's many admirers was one Eisik Yankes, or Isaac Jacobson, from the neighbouring town of Dorbyan; he was young, handsome and of good fortune. He was, in fact, the heir

apparent to the most successful trading firm in Dorbyan as well as to a fine estate known as " Bachuska ", situated within a mile of Dorbyan, where the Jacobsons resided. Isaac was reputed to be a sound man of business, of excellent character and a good companion, but he was neither an intellectual nor a man of learning such as was expected from a future husband for Dvore Hinde, therefore his attentions were shunned. But Isaac was not the sort of man to accept defeat easily, he was of a strong character and a fighter, and accordingly persisted in his attention.

When Wolf Charles Behrman died his oldest son Moushe had already been in practice for some time, as a licensed Custom House Broker and forwarding agent; the business had grown tremendously, the clientele came from far and wide. It was apparently clear to Wolf Charles long before his death, that the importance of the Custom House called for more than one expeditor, and since competition was likely to come, it had better come from the family. He therefore established his son Moushe, who was married and had a grown up family, as a fully fledged expeditor. Many accounts were handed over to Moushe, and for some years father and son retained the monopoly of Custom House brokerage and the business of advancing money to their clients.

The second son, Aaron Hirsh, known to the family as Ore Hirshe, stayed with his father learning the business. When his father died, Aaron Hirsh had not as yet had sufficient experience; moreover, he had a complex that too many accounts had been transferred to his brother Moushe who was by that time quite successful. As a result jealousy crept in and unfriendliness followed; most of the family placed the blame for this jealousy and unfriendliness on the wife of Ore Hirshe. She was of good family, and had come to the House from a neighbouring town, but she was a queer character to say the least. Wherever the blame, the fact remains that the state of the business at the time of Wolf Charles' death, was a bit chaotic. Dvore Hinde, like the rest of the family, disliked Ore Hirshe's wife intensely, and though Zipe, her father's widow, was there as the " head of the house ", it was nevertheless Ore Hirshe's wife who began to rule the roost making it uncomfortable for everybody. Briefly she wanted Dvore Hinde out of the way. As hostess to the many clients who dined and wined at the house, Ore Hirshe's wife naturally expected some attention from the men, but they were not interested in her, it was Dvore Hinde they always sought, consequently she made it miserable for her.



THE TWO DVORE HINDES

The Aunt, Dvore Hinde Jacobson standing. The niece, Dvore Hinde Gordon

(*Circa* 1880)

18

Isaac Jacobson of Dorbyan was an exporter of flax and flaxseed in a rather big way and he was a client of the House: his visits were frequent ; after the death of Dvore Hinde's father they became more frequent.

Unlike his earlier visits, when he came on horseback, he began to come in a carriage and pair with a coachman, or in the winter in a magnificent sleigh with jingling bells, things such as only the gentry would indulge in. His approaches and invitations for rides were at first shunned; how could she accept attentions from a man who was not her social equal. True, Eisik's ancestors had been successful and respectable traders for generations, but he had no " Yichus "! He was neither an intellectual nor a man of learning: no, she would not have him.

The reasons why she acquiesced eventually are not far to seek. To begin with she was not at all happy at home, secondly she disliked " Shadchonim " and craved for romance; she was a lover of romance to her last days ; thirdly, she felt, no doubt, that being so much in love with her he would permit himself to be ' moulded ' by her to understand the finer things in life ; lastly, the glitter of wealth and comfort and the beautiful presents he showered on her. Few women could resist a young, handsome, dashing and persistent suitor, and Dvore Hinde was no exception, at the age of nineteen therefore, in 1865, she married Isaac Jacobson.

In the little town of Dorbyan, the coming of a bride from a neighbouring town was almost a weekly event and usually meant a one day wonder, on the first Sabbath when the " Kalle " was brought to Shull: after that she was part and parcel of the local community. Not so, however, in the case of Dvore Hinde. Her arrival there as the Bride of Eisik Yankes created a sensation. They knew of her as a beautiful woman, as the daughter of a stately house and of good education, but they had never seen her " in action ".

Within a matter of days of her arrival there, Dvore Hinde was dubbed " Die Krottinger Grafin ", The Countess of Krottingen. All the " sheiteled " housewives were simply horrified, they had seen nothing like it! True, Dvore Hinde also wore a " sheitel " but hers could hardly be distinguished from her own hair, it was made by a Memeler artist instead of by the local " Sheitelmacherke ". The local wives had half of their foreheads covered with " sheitels "; not so Dvore Hinde, why hide her lovely forehead?

What amazed the Dorbyaner most was the fact that she enjoyed the company of men, an unheard of thing for a young married woman. She was fairly well read, rather well informed and a good conversationalist, this together with beauty and stateliness attracted to her the élite of the town. The women of the town were horrified and began " buzz-buzzing " with all sorts of stories. This came to Dvore Hinde's ears and she laughed; the fact is that she enjoyed being the centre of attraction and was very much amused at the tittle-tattle of the local women-folk. Dorbyan had no resident doctor, the nearest being at Krottingen; it did, however, possess a feldsher, an ex-Army Field Doctor with no qualifications, also an apothecary who, in order to carry on his profession, had to have a University education. These two and a local teacher were the intellectuals of the town and were Dvore Hinde's intimate friends.

Isaac Jacobson had his business office in his house as was the custom in that town; he had a great many callers at all times of the day and often at night. Food and drinks were served at all hours; frequently in the forenoon Dvore Hinde, in an elaborate morning dress, would join the men at tea or coffee. This also was an unheard of thing, a morning dress in the presence of men! Quite unorthodox, and the town " babbled ". But she continued to laugh, she was amused. At least she was not being ignored. It took some time for the local housewives to realise that Dvore Hinde was different from the average, she was a personality, an outstanding one, and they began to respect her and seek her friendship and advice; before very long she assumed the " leadership "; she became, in fact, the " First Lady " of Dorbyan.

To judge from conversations with her in her latter years, one would say that she was never completely happy in Dorbyan; she was, however, a good and faithful wife and the greatest of mothers to her eight children, six daughters and two sons.

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Economic conditions in Lithuania in the latter part of the nineteenth century became very bad, the merchants and traders suffered great losses and Isaac Jacobson was no exception. He realised that Dorbyan offered no future for his already large family, so he moved to Libau. Libau, or as the Latvians call it, Lipaja, is a fortified city on the Baltic and was at that time, the most



" MAIN STREET ", DORBYAN, LITHUANIA

This photograph was taken by the Author in 1923 when on a visit to Dorbyan. Reading from left to right are YANKE BEIRECH JACOBS, SAMUEL JACOBS of Paterson, New Jersey, U.S.A., and DOVID JACOBS. Yanke and Dovid being " natives " of Dorbyan

important port in the province. Unfortunately, before he had a chance to do very much, Isaac Jacobson, in 1885, took ill and died. Thus at the age of thirty-nine and with eight children Dvore Hinde was left a widow.

In April 1907, when Dvore Hinde was past middle age and had five of her six daughters married, she wrote to her sister Esther Reiche. In that letter she quoted the following from the poet Schiller:—

" Jeder Mensch ist der Schmied seines Glueckes ".

which means " Every man is Master of his Fate ". In that sentence will probably be found the key to Dvore Hinde's philosophy. She was never unmindful of the fact that she had to carry on until all her daughters were married, and she spared no effort in that direction.

In 1908 at the wedding of Mary, her youngest daughter, she proudly surveyed her six sons-in-law and remarked, " I have not done too badly, have I?". She was master of her fate.

Her one great ambition, as a widow, was to see the girls happily married. She was at that time even more attractive and beautiful than in her youth, and had numerous offers of marriage which she declined. She was, as she later said, the shepherdess and refused to desert her flock.

Economic conditions in Lithuania had worsened, many of the family emigrated to different parts of the Western World—South Africa, America and England. Those that remained were in no position to offer her financial aid. Isaac Jacobson's own business had barely been established when he passed away, what was left of it went to the creditors; Dvore Hinde, therefore, had to act quickly to provide for her eight orphaned children.

20

To " dispose " of a daughter in those days was no mean task for anybody; not even for those who were able to provide a dowry and " Nadan " (cash settlement), least of all for a poor widow; Dvore Hinde, however, was fortunate in that respect with all her daughters. All the girls were attractive and beautiful women which helped considerably. Minnie, the eldest, met Mr. Yudel Jaffe while residing in Libau. Jaffe was a handsome man, agreeable, intelligent and of good family. He held an important position in a wholesale warehouse, he was in love with Minnie and they were married without the usual fuss in 1886.

Libau offered very little scope for a livelihood, there was no outlet for Dvore Hinde's business talents (of business she had an astute understanding), nor for suitable posts for those of the daughters who were old enough to work. Memel, on the other hand, offered possibilities.

The trade of silks, perfumes, jewellery and other luxuries was with Germany. In Memel there were important wholesale warehouses with whom the Lithuanian importers did business. Memel also was close to Krottingen through which Custom House importations had to be cleared; if, therefore, Dvore Hinde was to make the best use of her business talents, to Memel she had to move, this she did with five of her daughters. Her elder son Morris had meanwhile been sent to his uncle Lazar Behrman who was then in Sunderland, County Durham, England, while the younger son Samuel was sent to " Cheder " in Dorbyan.

The duties on the imported luxuries were very high, and though the Custom House at Krottingen was as busy as a bee-hive, yet only about twenty-five per cent of the imports passed through it, the other seventy-five per cent was smuggled across the border. To be engaged in smuggling or in dealing with contraband was, as in 17th and 18th century England, looked upon as legitimate trading; in fact the " best people " were engaged in it.

In the border towns of Krottingen, Gorzd and Pollangen one hardly knew who was and who was not engaged in smuggling or contraband trading.

The actual smuggling was carried out by hired Lithuanians to whose shoulders and backs the " swag " was strapped. These men were usually tall, of fine physique and excellent sprinters. The " parcels " they carried often amounted to large sums, and the earnings of the Lithuanians, when they were successful in crossing the border, were comparatively high; the border, protected by soldiers here and there, extended for many miles. Lesser traders, especially those dealing in perfumes and jewellery, who could not afford the hire of professional smugglers, took chances and carried on their person many valuables without making declarations to the Customs. The risk was great, because frequently the Customs Officers would order a " body search " which meant stripping, male or female, and if contraband was found it meant a prison sentence plus a monetary fine and confiscation of the contraband; equally, however, was the profit great if all went well.



DVORE HINDE AND DAUGHTERS
(*Circa* 1905)

21

From conversations with Dvore Hinde at 682 Eagle Avenue, Bronx in the latter years of her life, one gathered that during the period she resided in Memel when she was "trading" with Krottingen, she took many "risks"; on one occasion she had a very serious "spot of bother"; fortunately the influence of the family was strong enough to save the situation. After this "spot of bother" her trading with Krottingen had to cease, there was therefore only one thing left—emigration. From the United States, where many of Krottingen had emigrated to, there came reports of employment and good pay for young people; to America therefore, she would take her family. She chose Paterson, N.J., because already there were in that city a number of relatives, chiefly Dorbyanner, notably Moushe Nokes Jacobs, and Hirshe Hindes Jacobs, both cousins of her late husband, and many others more distantly related. In addition there were many from the neighbouring towns of Lithuania who still remembered "Welfe Gershons" of Krottingen and among whom Dvore Hinde felt she and her children would find a home and congenial companionship. She was not wrong, and found all that for the many years she resided in Paterson. In 1892, therefore, after a very great struggle of seven years, she reached Paterson, N.J.

The esteem in which she was held is best illustrated by the following. When she arrived in Paterson she was taken to a house completely furnished to the minutest detail. "This is your home" said the man who, amongst others, accompanied her from the Railway Station to the house. He was no relative, nor was he a man of wealth, but a comfortably situated shoe store keeper and a native of Dorbyan. He knew her antecedents, both from Dorbyan and Krottingen, also her circumstances, and did it out of respect for her and from the goodness of his heart. His name was Leibe Urdang.

Her daughters were quickly able to get employment in the shirt factories of "Manhattan" and "Price's", and once more Dvore Hinde was able to play the role of hostess: this she did most successfully.

The news of Dvore Hinde's arrival quickly spread among the "landslite" in New York, Brooklyn and other nearby places. Her house in Paterson soon became a Mecca for all of them,

especially so for the young bucks who wanted to become acquainted with the five beautiful daughters.

Dvore Hinde was now in her element, she had brought her children safely across the Atlantic, away from a struggle for a livelihood to comparative affluence. All the children were earning good money and she knew how to hold on to the purse strings and do the managing; above all, she enjoyed being the centre of her house that was always full of visitors.

She loved company, especially the companionship of young people. She herself was always young in spirit, her sense of humour never left her, and the speculation among the daughters as to which young man was interested in whom, amused her immensely.

The visits of the young men were not without good results. The first " capture " was made by Dr. Abraham Sacks who married Olga in 1896. Dr. Sacks is a native of Zager, Lithuania, of good family, learned and cultured, he is in fact a distant relative on the Behrman side of the family. Next came Ephraem Jacobson (no blood relation) also a Lithuanian, who married Pauline in 1898. " Froim ", by which name he was familiarly known in the family, was a congenial companion.

Arnold Cohen married Fanny in 1900. Arnold was a native of Dorbyan; he was an artist of note, but unfortunately passed away in middle age.

22

Though the years in Paterson were happy ones, yet Dvore Hinde could never acclimatize herself to that City, it was altogether too provincial to suit her progressive outlook ; besides, her three daughters were happily married and lived in New York, why not be close to them? Moreover, in New York there would probably be excellent opportunities for the two youngest daughters; to New York therefore, she moved.

Her elder son Morris, having come from England, married Miss Kassel and shortly after moved to Canada where his son, William, and several daughters were born. Eventually, however, Morris returned to Paterson, where he resided for some years. When his son William graduated at Columbia University and started up in practice in New York, Morris took his family to New York also.

The first marriage of Dvore Hinde's second son, Samuel, was not



DVORE HINDE ASSOCIATION DINNER GROUP

Shortly after Dvore Hinde's death, her children and grandchildren formed a family association in memory of Isaac and Dvore Hinde Jacobson, known as the "Foundation". Its object—Philanthropy. The Author and his wife were the guests of the "Foundation" members in New York on the 7th April, 1934, when this photograph was taken.

successful; the second wife, however, was a charming lady with whom he was very happy and who bore him a son and a daughter. Unfortunately Sam died soon after. Sam, besides being an outstandingly handsome man, possessed a heart of gold.

In the early part of the century her daughter Minnie, her husband and their three children, Isaac, George and Lottie, also reached New York from Libau.

Edward Margolis, a native of Telz and of Rabbinic stock, married Sophy the fifth daughter in 1903, and Isidor Kumesh, a native of Kurland and nephew of Ephraem Jacobson, Pauline's husband, married the youngest daughter, Mary, in 1908. Isidor possesses a keen sense of humour and is an admirable companion.

23

In the years following 1908, Dvore Hinde's residence, 682, Eagle Avenue, Bronx, became the headquarters of the whole family. Most of the children resided in the neighbourhood, but all of them, even those living further afield, such as Minnie, down town, centred their social activities around " Mama ".

It was indeed a remarkable sight to watch Dvore Hinde in " action " on evenings or weekends when she was surrounded by her children, and by that time, many grandchildren. She was the true and perfect Matriarch. She loved all those around her and in turn was beloved by them. Few parents are more loved and respected than was Dvore Hinde by her sons-in-law. She possessed natural genius, intuition and good sense and made the best use of them all including her sense of humour.

Like all sensible people, Dvore Hinde prepared for the inevitable early in life. When she left Memel she took with her sufficient cloth of pure linen for a shroud and a few gold pieces to pay for the funeral expenses. She mentioned this in the course of an intimate talk in 1907, adding,

> " My own hard earned money will pay for my last journey ".

Her sons abbreviated " Jacobson " to Jacobs ; she, however, insisted on the original name and she died, in 1927, at the age of 81, as she lived, Dvore Hinde Jacobson beloved by all. Her descendants will do well to remember the key to her philosophy:

> " Every man is Master of his Fate ".

The following are the descendants of Dvore Hinde and Isaac Jacobson, all of, or near New York, U.S.A.

Minnie (Mrs. Abraham Yudel) Jaffe. three children.
- Isaac Jaffe (wife Fanny).
- Lotty (Mrs. Sol) Dorfman, three sons.
  - Herbert Dorfman (wife Edna), one child.
    - Madeline.
  - Robert Dorfman.
  - Jack Dorfman.
- George Jaffe (wife Gussie)

Olga (Dr. Abraham) Sacks, three children.
- Irving Sacks (wife Jean), one son.
  - David.
- Celia (Mrs. William) Jacobs, two children.
  - Stanley Jacobs (wife Thelma).
  - Claire (Mrs. Woodraw) Kosakow.
- Jacob Sacks.

Pauline (Mrs. Ephraem) Jacobson.

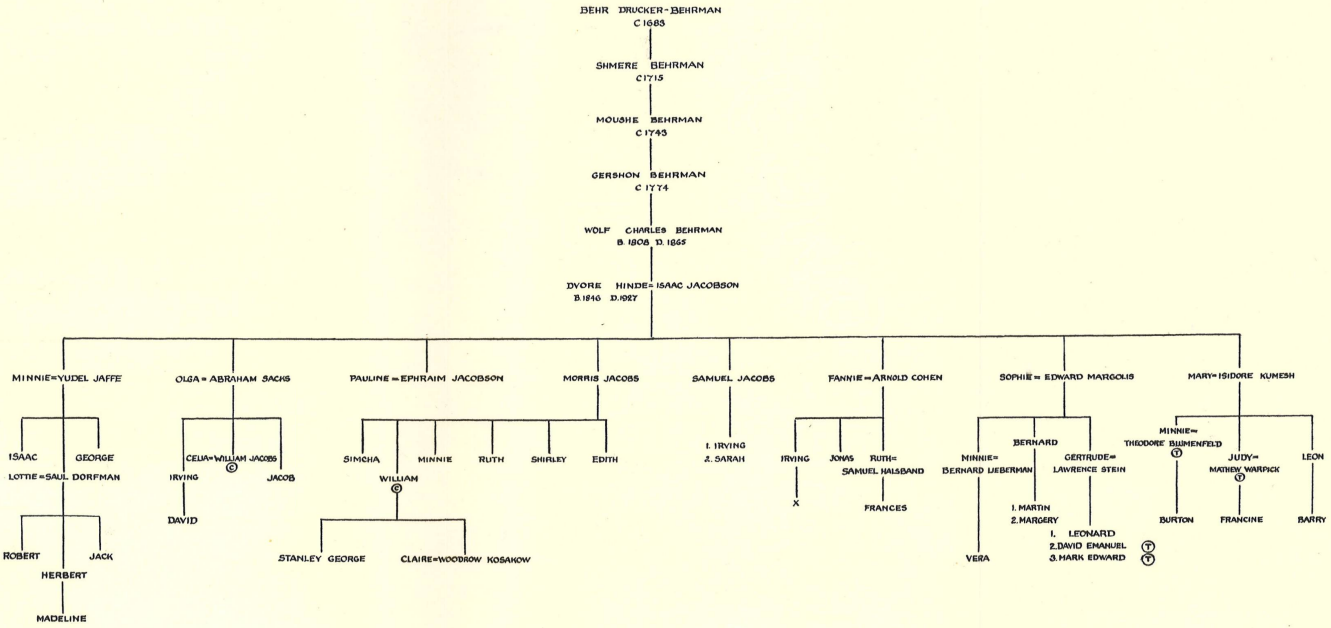
Morris Jacobs (wife Menuche), six children.
- Simcha.
- William. (see Celia Sacks above).
- Minnie.
- Ruth.
- Shirley.
- Edith.

Samuel Jacobs. (wife Rose), two children.
- Irving.
- Sarah.

Fanny (Mrs. Arnold) Cohen, three children.
- Irving. (wife Betty), one child.
- Jonas. (wife Margery).
- Ruth (Mrs. Samuel) Halsband. one child,
  - Frances.

Sophy (Mrs. Edward) Margolis, three children.
- Minnie (Mrs. Bernard) Lieberman, one child,
  - Vera.
- Bernard Margolis (wife Rose), two children.
  - Martin.
  - Margery.

CHAPTER 23



X NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE

C MARRIED COUSINS

T TWINS

Gertrude (Mrs. Lawrence) Stein, three children.
Leonard.
David Emanuel } Twins.
Mark Edward }

Mary (Mrs. Isidore) Kumesh, three children.
Minnie (Mrs. Theodore) Blumenfeld, one child.
Burton.
Judy (Dr. Mathew) Warpick, one child.
Francine.
Leon Kumesh, (wife Laura), one child.
Barry.

MEMORANDA

MEMORANDA

MEMORANDA

MEMORANDA

24

LAZAR BEHRMAN.

Lazar was the fifth son of Wolf Charles and the only son of his second wife Zipe. As a result of an accident in infancy his left shoulder was permanently dislocated and caused a slight hump; this, no doubt, retarded his growth. Unlike his brothers and sisters who were tall, Lazar was short. He possessed finely chiselled features and a quiet but dignified manner.

He also possessed a very fine brain. Originally he was intended for law and was sent to Dorpat University; later, however, he decided not to pursue his studies, and joined his nephew, Aaron Behrman (Gershon's son) in Switzerland. Eventually both he and Aaron came to Sunderland in the North of England where they entered business.

During his residence in Sunderland he married a Krottingen lady, Rivke by name (not to be confused with his sister-in-law of the same name).

He went to South Africa, and upon the outbreak of the Boer War returned to Sunderland. There he lived until the war's end when he returned to South Africa with his family. Some few years later he died. His widow survived him for some years.

There were five children of the marriage—two sons and three daughters, Wolf Charles and Zodack, and Sophy (Zipe), Ray and Dora.

Unfortunately, the sons passed away early in life. The daughters Sophy (Zipe) (Mrs. Hotz), Ray (Mrs. Green) and Dora Behrman reside in Johannesburg, South Africa.



LAZAR BEHRMAN, youngest son of Wolf Charles by his second wife Zipe Behrman

MEMORANDA

MEMORANDA

25

ESTHER REICHE LEVY.

Esther Reiche was the youngest child of Wolf Charles and Zipe Behrman. She was five years old when her father died in 1865; this necessitated a complete change in the domestic arrangements, which undoubtedly had a great bearing on her upbringing as well as on her health.

During the lifetime of her father the entire house was occupied by his immediate family. After his death, however, the house was divided between families. The son that succeeded to the business, Aaron Hirsh, retained the ground floors, whereas the widow and her three children—Minnie, Lazar and Esther Reiche—occupied the upper floors.

At the same time the widow had now to depend on her stepson for her allowance as her share from the business. Wolf Charles apparently had a good income, but he kept up a big establishment, lived well, and gave freely to charity ; consequently, he left no liquid assets, with the result that the widow had to tighten the purse strings.

Judging from conversations with Esther Reiche in latter years one gathered that the sudden disappearance of her father who worshipped her, and the changed circumstances, made a very great impression upon the household.

During the lifetime of Wolf Charles, the education of the children, as was the custom in the best families, was by full time tutors in the home; this luxury could not now be indulged in. When Esther was old enough, therefore, she was sent to the home of friends in Deutsch Krottingen immediately across the German border, whose children were of Esther Reiche's age. These friends employed excellent tutors.

She was delicate as a child, and the week-end travelling to and from school, though not far, did not help matters. Meanwhile, her mother had established a soft goods business and when Esther Reiche left school she joined her in that, eventually taking complete charge.

The languages spoken in Krottingen were Lithuanian, German, Russian and Polish. Esther Reiche spoke all of them with fluency; this, plus her very good looks and charm of manner, helped to make the business a success.

Her sister Minnie, a few years her senior, was of very delicate health, ailing frequently; nevertheless, Minnie had a great many admirers, for she likewise was very good looking. Minnie, however, died in girlhood.

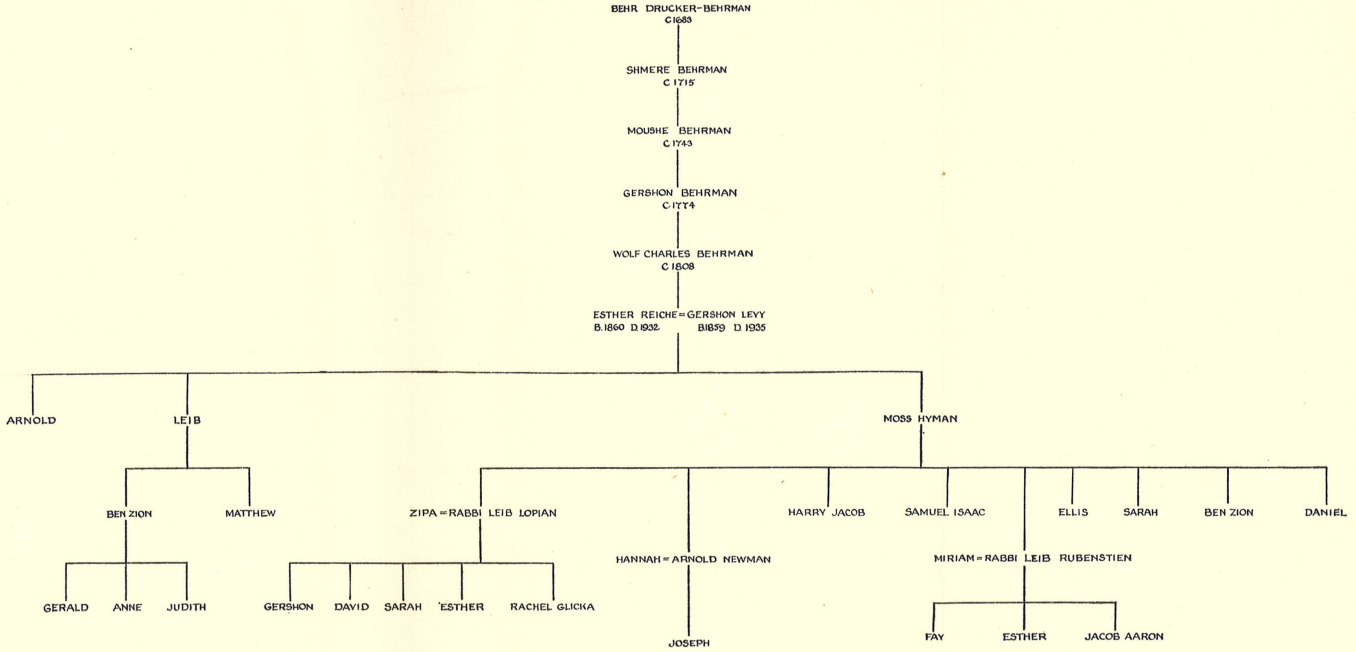
Soon after Minnie's death, Esther Reiche became engaged, and shortly after was married to Gershon Levy of Dorbyan of whom mention is made elsewhere. Few women were as fortunate in their choice of husbands as was Esther Reiche.

For some years before she died, Esther Reiche was ailing, also she suffered from cataracts on her eyes; she refused to be operated upon and in the latter years of her life she was quite blind. Though there was always help in the house, yet it was Gershon who " waited " on her. His slavish devotion to her had to be seen to be appreciated.

Esther Reiche had a big heart, like her father, and like him she dealt with her charities anonymously. She possessed the skill of making friends as well as the art of keeping them.

She died in Sunderland in 1932 at the age of 72, mourned by very many friends, and by her husband and three sons—Arnold, Leib and Moss Hyman.

CHAPTER 26


BEHR DRUCKER-BEHRMAN
C 1683
SHMERE BEHRMAN
C 1715
MOUSHE BEHRMAN
C 1743
GERSHON BEHRMAN
C 1774
WOLF CHARLES BEHRMAN
C 1808
ESTHER REICHE = GERSHON LEVY
B. 1860 D. 1932 B 1859 D 1935
ARNOLD
LEIB
MOSS HYMAN
BEN ZION
MATTHEW
ZIPA = RABBI LEIB LOPIAN
HARRY JACOB
SAMUEL ISAAC
ELLIS
SARAH
BEN ZION
DANIEL
GERALD
ANNE
JUDITH
GERSHON
DAVID
SARAH
ESTHER
RACHEL GLICKA
HANNAH = ARNOLD NEWMAN
MIRIAM = RABBI LEIB RUBENSTIEN
JOSEPH
FAY
ESTHER
JACOB AARON



ESTHER REICHE LEVY, youngest child of Wolf Charles and his second wife Zipe Behrman, and mother of the Author

MEMORANDA

MEMORANDA

26

GERSHON LEVY

The house in Dorbyan of Ben Zion Yitzchak Levy, father of Gershon, was quite unlike the Behrman house at Krottingen. The very air of the Dorbyan house was charged with Rabbinic lore. The Dorbyan communal pinkas recorded a long line of the Levy family, many of whom held important communal posts in past generations; all held these posts because they were men of learning and piety.

Ben Zion Yitzchak, Sichrono Tzadik Livrocho, was a man of learning and piety and ultra-orthodox. He was never known to utter a mundane word on the Sabbath, on which day only ' Divrei Torah ' were spoken. On Mondays and Thursdays, except when these days coincided with Holy Days, he refrained from partaking of food before noon. He was a great humanitarian, as will be seen from the following. On a YOM KIPPUR, in the midst of prayer at the Synagogue, he was informed that a woman recently confined, was ordered fresh milk, but there was no one who would milk a cow on YOM KIPPUR. Ben Zion promptly laid aside his praying shawl, went to his own cow shed, milked the cow and personally delivered the milk to the house of the confined woman and quickly returned to Synagogue; all of which was accomplished without uttering a single syllable. To have spoken would have been to ' MAFSIK ' breaking the sequence of prayer.

During weekdays, except Mondays and Thursdays, his breakfast was sent to the Beth Hamedrash, where he was immersed in the study of Talmud, until lunch time. Ben Zion Yitzchak was famed for his hospitality, and he seldom came home without bringing an " ORACH " (a guest), especially on Friday nights and the Sabbath Day. He died in 1898 at the age of 75.

The curriculum of the local Cheder did not provide for anything further than The Five Books and The Prophets; consequently, for the study of Talmud, Ben Zion engaged a particularly brilliant young Talmudic scholar to instruct his three sons of whom Gershon was the youngest.

Some thirty years later, in Krottingen, the same brilliant Talmudist, Reb Leibe Welfes by name, taught Talmud to the author and his brothers, to Abe and Julius Behrman, to Dr. Ben Z. Channon of Chicago, and many more of that generation who have carried the ' Torch ' to different parts of the world.

It is interesting to note that the foremost Cheder in Dorbyan at that period was presided over by Eisik Hessels, father of David Wolffsohn, the man who succeeded Dr. Herzl as Zionist leader. David, who was only a few years older than Gershon, was one of his father's pupils, but unlike David, who at an early age was sent to his elder brother in Memel to learn the timber trade, Gershon was sent to the Talmudic Academy (Yeshiva) of Meer, and later to that of Volozhin, where he studied under the two famous Principals, the " NAZEB " and Raphael Shapiro, and received a Rabbinic diploma, though he never used the title of Rabbi. There also he was the classmate of his nephew-to-be, Rabbi Mendel Yitzchak Behrman.

Gershon's accomplishments at the Yeshivas are summarised in the accompanying appreciation by his friend Rabbi Elijah Lopian, Principal of the Eitz Chaim Yeshiva, London.

When Gershon married Esther Reiche, youngest child of Wolf Charles and Zipe Behrman, it was intended that he should continue his studies; he did, in fact, enrol in a post-graduate Academy in Kovno after he was married, but a destructive fire in Krottingen, where most of the Behrman fortune was lost, changed the whole situation.

The fire which took place in eighteen eighty-nine, completely gutted the town which was built chiefly of wood. Though outwardly the Behrman house was not affected, as it was the only dwelling house built of stone, most of the contents which had been collected for generations, were lost.

When Gershon came to the Behrman house as the husband of Esther Reiche, there was still sufficient of a fortune to enable him to continue his post-graduate studies, but these sudden reverses, due to insufficient insurance, almost brought ruin to the mother of Esther Reiche, and, of course, to Gershon and his wife also, since the whole dowry was lost. Gershon, therefore, had to abandon his studies and take to commerce.

Economic conditions were then very bad in Lithuania. On the other hand, news came from South Africa of great prosperity there. Already several men from the immediate neighbourhood who had emigrated to South Africa had established themselves there and were doing well; Gershon, therefore, emigrated to South Africa, leaving his wife and three children in Krottingen.



BEN ZION YITZCHAK LEVY, paternal grandfather of the Author
(*Circa* 1894)

First in Cape Town, after that in Johannesburg, altogether Gershon Levy spent five years in South Africa.

When he reached Johannesburg there were no Orthodox Jewish Religious Services to speak of. Consequently, with several intimate friends he proceeded to form the first Orthodox Congregation. Among others in this work were Leibe Meine, father of Dr. Channon of Chicago, U.S.A., and Woolf Sacks, grandfather of Aubrey S. (Abba) Eban, Israeli Representative to the United Nations.

The first Rav of this Congregation was Rabbi Dagutsky.

Though he was successful in business, he did not think South Africa a satisfactory place wherein his children could receive the proper traditional education. Gershon might have stayed some years longer in South Africa, but the " Jameson Raid " in 1895/6 persuaded him that war between Britain and the Boers was inevitable. To this he was very much opposed. Shortly before the Boer War, therefore, he left South Africa, returned to Krottingen, and after a short stay, wound up his affairs and brought his wife and family to Sunderland in the North of England. There he established himself in business. He was accepted as one of the leaders of the Jewish Community, and was affectionately known as " Reb Gershon ".

His somewhat playful and friendly twinkle, as well as his ready sense of humour, made him friends and admirers everywhere.

Gershon Levy's great ambition was to bring up his sons as men of learning and piety. He was never ambitious for great wealth, and would undoubtedly have approved of the following lines from the poetry of Horace—

> He that holds fast the golden mean
> And lives contentedly between
> The little and the great,
> Feels not the want that pinch the poor
> Nor plagues that haunt the rich man's door.

As a husband he was angelic, as a parent unique, and there are few parents who have received greater respect from their children than Esther Reiche and Gershon Levy.

Gershon Levy died in Sunderland in 1935 at the age of 76.

He was survived by three sons—Arnold, Leib and Moss Hyman.

The following are descendants of Gershon and Esther Reiche Levy; all residing in Great Britain.

Arnold Levy (wife Lena Esther Jacobs).

Leib Levy (wife Clara Cohen).

Ben Zion (wife Esther Bloch).

Gerald.

Anne.

Judith.

Matthew.

Moss Hyman Levy (wife Leah Serevsky).

Zipa (Rabbi Leib) Lopian.

Gershon.

David.

Sarah.

Esther.

Rachel Glicka.

Hannah (Mrs. Arnold) Newman.

Joseph.

Harry Jacob.

Samuel Isaac.

Miriam (Rabbi Leib) Rubinstein.

Fay.

Esther.

Jacob Aaron.

Ellis.

Sarah.

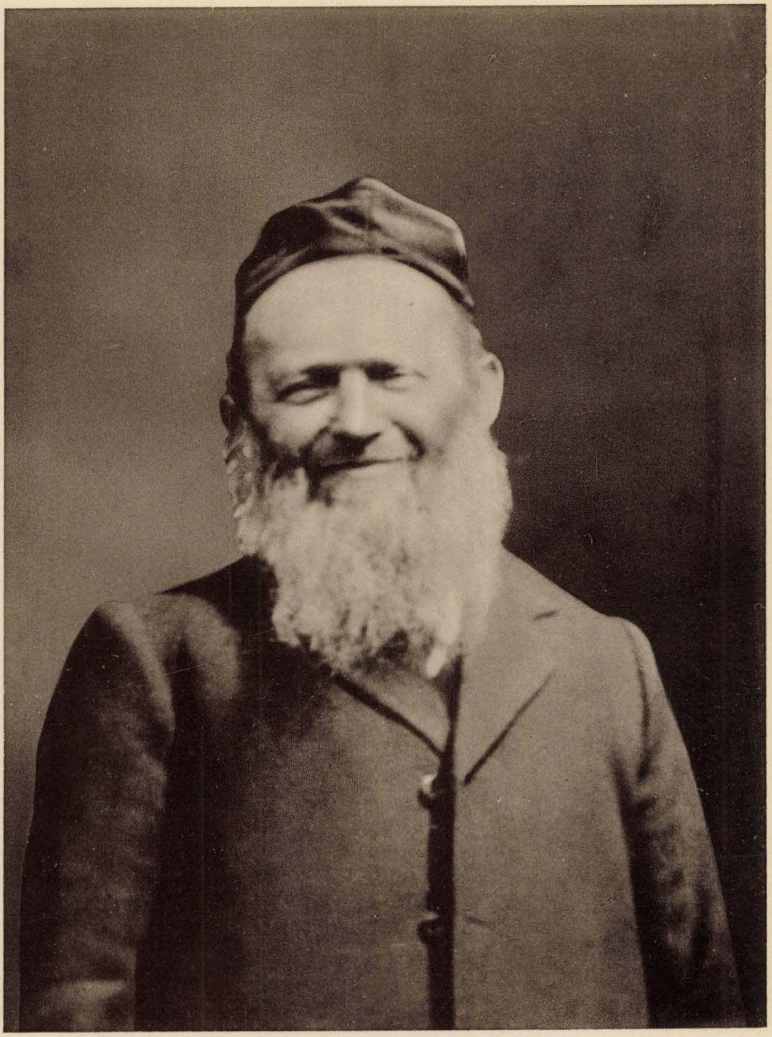
Ben Zion.

Daniel.

GERSHON LEVY.

The following is an appreciation by his old friend Rabbi Elijah Lopian, Principal of Yeshiva Etz Chaim, London, on Gershon Levy, whom he knew intimately.

No attempt has been made to translate either this or the appreciation on Leib Levy, for fear that some of the beautiful, poetic language might be lost in translation.



GERSHON LEVY, father of the Author

This photograph is an enlargement of a " snap " taken by the Author in 1923

בע"ת

רק זמן מועט זמצאתי בקרבותו של האיש הדגול מרבבה ההוא, היה לי הזכות לראותו לפרקים ולהמצא בחברתו רק לזמן קצר, ולכן לתת הערכה שלמה ומקיפה על אישיותו הבהירה והמזונית היא לי כמועט בלתי אפשרי קשה לעמוד על אפיו האמיתי של האדם בכלל, לחדי של עולמו הפנימי, ולחשוף עמק חביוני נפשו שעם מסתתר האני האמיתי שלו, ולדעת אשית כזו כר' זרשעון ליווי זצ"ל, היה קשה גם לאדם שנמצא עמו בתמידית כל ימי חייו. כי גדולת הכיתרת של מדות איש המעשה הזה, שרכש בנפשו הרבה מקניני התורה. היתה המורה של "הצנע לכת".

לא בקש פרסום למעשיו הטובים, ברח מין הכבוד, לא בקש אף הפרה והוקרה מהחברה בעד מעשיו המופלאים, עמל להסתיר מה שעשה מעיני בני אדם וכל מעשיו היו רק לעשות רצון אביו שבשמים ולגדל כבוד קונו.

אמנם להשתמש במשל הידוע: שיכחום מילא על כל גדותיו, אחרי כל זהרות היתירה של אדם הנושאו או אפשר שלא תפלנה איזו טיפות ממתוי, אדם רב וגדול המעלה עד כמה שישתדל להסתיר את מעשיו ומהותו, אי אפשר שלא תתגלה איזה קורטוב מפכוני עשיותו הרוחנית, ואי אפשר שלא יתגו ויזהרו איזה קוים בהירים אצילים מסתרים, אם לא שיפרש למרחי מין החברה - ומין המקצת שבמקצת מן המועט שבמועט הנני רושם כאן שרטוטים קלים אודים, מעין בבואה דבבואת של דמותו העילאות עדיין תי בזכרון שלי את הרשם הראשון שפעל עלי, כשראיתי בפעם הראשונה. קסם אישיותו היה שפון על פניו וכל אדם שבא בקרבתו לא היה יכל להשתחרר. מרשם פניו המסכרות, פנים המפיקים חן ואצילות ואהבה לכל אדם שפע של רחמים וחנינה לכל יצור ובריא שיפעו ממעמקי נפשו השהורה, ושבע חותמו על פניו, חותם שאי אפשר היה לו להסתירו, חותם של אצילות רוחנית עלאה. ומאליהם היה עושים במחשבתו של אדם הרואהו דברי התנא: יולא עוד אלא שכל העולם כדי הוא לו. נקרא רע אהוב אוהב את המקום אוהב את הבריות, מושמח את המקום משמח את הבריות. ועם כל אהבתו לבריות, עם כל נחיוזתו ורוחתו, היה זהירות בקרבו מדת האמת, לא ויתר על שום דבר שנטה, אפילו נטיה כל שהוא מקו האמת עד שהנאון הצדיק ר' אליה' זצ"ל מקרטיגנה עיר מולדתו אמר פעם אליו בקשר תוכחתו לאדם "שלא לכל אדם ראוי להגיד האמת הערומה בשלמותה"....

אמנם תכחתו היתה מאהבה מסותרת, לא היה בלבו שום שינא וכעס על האיש שהיה מוכיחו, רק מתוך אהבת האמת, ומתוך אהבת לאיש שעשה ממנה הוא מקיים את יהוכח תוכיח", ומתוך רחמים וחמלה על האיש שמבלי דעת הוא מדיח את עצמו ועושה רעה לנפשו. ויש שהיה מוכיחו קשה למנהיגי העיר, ואח"כ היה האיש תהוא תבוה בראותו בא אח"כ אל ביתו ונוהג באהבה ויחידית כאלו כלום לא קרה דבר....

"אהבת המקום ואהבת הבריות" שלו גרמו שמעשיו מעשי הצדקה והחסד היו לו הכרחיות שאי אפשר לחיות בלעדה, ובשעה שהיתה שעתו דחוקה ולא היה ביכלתו לתת צדקה מישלו היה לזה מעות לזה. כמו שאדם לזה על הכרחיות שאי אפשר להתקיים בלעדה. הוא היה מתלמידים של אברהם אבינו שאי עשיית חסד היה לו כעבר גדול מבלתי נשא ....

"ונהנים מזמנו עבה ותועיה".

הוא לא היה רב ומנהיג רשמי, כמדומני שלא רבים ידעו מגדלותו בתורה - ורק במקום נודע ליזה - הוא למד בבית אולפנא רבתי בישיבת וולוזין בצותא חדא עם חבריו שנספרו בסמו לגדולי הדור וקברניטיו ונסמך שם מרבותיו הגדולים אך מעולם לא קרא את עצמו בשם רב, ולא עשה תורתו קרדם לחפור בה רק עסק במסחר. - ותמימותו וישרותו במנהגו מוסחרות בשאירו רשם גם על בני בלי בית שבאו במגע ולאחר כמה שנים נשמר עמהם זכרונו הטוב. אך במסתר מבלי דראות השפיע השפעתו הגדולה על סביבתו. וגם מנהיגי הקהלה האחרת של עירו התיעצו עמו וקימו כל מה שמגידים להם, ומכין ששמעון פסקו של ר' גרשון זצ"ל לא נטו מימנו ימין ושמאל. ומובלי דואים היה הוא המנהיג האמיתי שלסביבתו. תקף היה בדעותיו אש חי וב פעלים בתקיפות ואמיצות הלב היה מוציא לפועל כל דבר טוב כלתקנה נחוצה ולא ישקוט האישיכי אם כלה הדבר" בר סמכא היה במלא מובן המלה. כל מה שהבטיח נלמה שהיה צריך להעשות יכולים היו לסמוך עליו כאלו נעשה. יגיבור עומד בפרץ". ומשפיע באמיתיותו גם על המנהיג הרוחני שעם כל גדלו בתורה היה כפוף לו ביודעים ובלא יודעים ... לעת זקנותו בעת שסבל

יסורים גדולים נראת בו המידה של קבלת יסורים בשלמותה, קיבל יסוריו באהבה ובסבלנות נפלאה ולמדות יסוריו הנוראים קבל כל אדם בסבר פנים יפות. לא היה אדם להעלות על לבו בראותו את מנותת נפשו, שהאיש המשוחח עמו בענים צוהלים כאלו מדוכא ביסורים גדולים. וכה עבד כעבד נאמן אדת בוראו בכל העתים ובכל המיצבים עבודה שלמה ואמיתית עד יום מותו.

מקום דקים אלי יכולים לקבל קצת הכרה מאישיותו הנשגבה. נקרים היו בו השפעת היושיבה וולחונית, והשפעת הגאון הצדיק ר' אלי' לוינזון זצ"ל מקרשינעה תלמיד אבי הבחור ר' ישראל מסלנט זצ"ל. ועם העדרו נאבד מן העולם דמות דיוקנם של ענקי הדורות.

The following is an appreciation of the Author's brother Leib Levy by his friend Mr. L. Skolsky.

אריה ליב לוי בר גרשון
נולד בקרשטינגען פלך קובנסק,
בכ"ט כסלו, ער"ח טבת ה' דחנכה
שנת תרמ"ו ונטבח"ל בכ' תלול
ב' תש"ט נפורטסמוטה, טבה

העתיק מוזנו מפ' טרספילד
עיר מלאר בתנגליה, טזמה
נמלט מלונדון בשנת ת"ש
מפני רעש חבלי קלע ותרועת
מלחמה.



LEIB LEVY, brother of the Author

מדינת זַמּוט הרתה

וַיֻּלַּד־בּוֹ וכל בני גילו במדינה

זו נתחנך על ברכי היהדות המסורת
שהוא החוט המשולש ולא יִנָּתֵק
על : התורה והיראה ומוֹרֶשֶׁת־אֲבוֹת
בגרותו המתופף בנתי הישיבות
הגדולות ובקובנא ומלחברקא
וגם ילמד מיס על ידי מרן בעל
ה"חפץ חיים", זלה"ה, ברחובן, שנמנה
על בני ישיבתו והיה מבחירי בניתו
וחוסים בצל קורת אֹהֶל מוֹרֵנוּ
המנוח, הרב"י שהיה גְּאוֹנוֹ ושרשו
ונופו בתוך הדור הקודם ומקרקע
בית המדרש הישן ינקו וזעו וֹפְרוּתוֹ
אבל בחילוניותו היה מעוטר בפיגו
על יפת וכלזרח התרה
בארץ מגוריו החדשה - חנגליה,
שבח להתקבץ בה בימי חרפו;
כגרוה, מהפעתו של הַפָּטָל"
דמתיבתא סלחברקא, מרן
ר' נטע צבי פינקל, זצ"ל, היתה
כאן, שבתורתו והליכות חייו של
האדון הגדול הזה, שהמנוח ילמד
מיס על ידו, היתה גם תוֹתָה
תְּעוּדָה של : "הָיָה חָכָם בְּלִבֶּךָ"
וכחמרת רבנו הקדוש הלרופה
במשנה שברפב דקנות: "הֱוֵי הוֹי
דרך ישרה שיבור לו האדם וכו'
ות פארת לו מן האדם". המנוח
היה לו לחבר רוח בו, שהיה יכול
ללכת לרוחו של כל אחד ואחד
והיתה דעתו מעורבת עם הבריות
היה לוֹ רעים להתרועע, נחמד
למעלה ואהוב למטה, אוהב את
הבריות ומקרבן לתורה, שזה היה
הגות לבו ומשׂח נפשו בחיים;
ויהי לו היום למפחר ולעסק
והלילה ללמוד ולהגות - והיו
לו מדרי משניות דרבנו הקדוש
ערוכים בכל ושמורים בזכרון
וכמה מפרקיהם שגורים על
פיו. המנוח, שהתחנק בעפר
רגלי גדולי הדור, התַּמֵּר בשמוע
רבותיו והתַּקֵּר בְּכָבוד הוריו
ומוריו והתחפש כנגד חוֹרָן
של חיות חכמינו זל ומימרותיהם
היו רגילין על לשונו. ועל־כן דהוה
ממקדימי ומחזכי לבי כוסתא
שיח ועיל שיח ונפיק וגדים
תלירתא, לא היה לנו בארמי, והיה
מקבל את כל הלרם בסבר פנים
יפות; - היה נעים בניבו, נחה בניקפו.
נוח במשקל ומתינו, חביב בחמוז, חכוב
לידעיו ומכיריו, חמוד לרעיו, רכוי
לחיו ודובר שלום לכל לרם,
שלין חזון לנפש כלה נפרץ בימים
הלה ובמקומות הללו, - ועל דלותו
קם בכינף דבלי בעפרת הלבדין ולקומתו
וה' ישלם נחומים לאבלי
ויחונן עפרו ויהי זכרו ברוך!

MEMORANDA

MEMORANDA

27

SORE SAMUNOV.

Sore, daughter of Gershon Behrman, married Rabbi Mordecai Aria Samunov, Rav of Windau, Latvia. In books of reference, Rabbi Mordecai is spoken of as a 'Gaon' and 'Tzadik'. The Rabbi was learned, cultured and of great piety. The Rabbi and Sore had five children, three sons and two daughters.

Moushe Samunov, son of the Rabbi and Sore resided in Orel, Russia where he and his wife died. There is no available information about his family other than about his son Mordecai or Max.

Max Samunov, son of Moushe, reached England about 1893. He changed his surname to Samuel and joined the British Navy where he served some twenty-eight years. After the 1914-1918 war, Max resided at West Hartlepool.

The following story in connection with Moushe Samunov is worth relating; the authenticity of the story is vouched for by Moushe's niece, Dvore Traub of Tel Aviv.

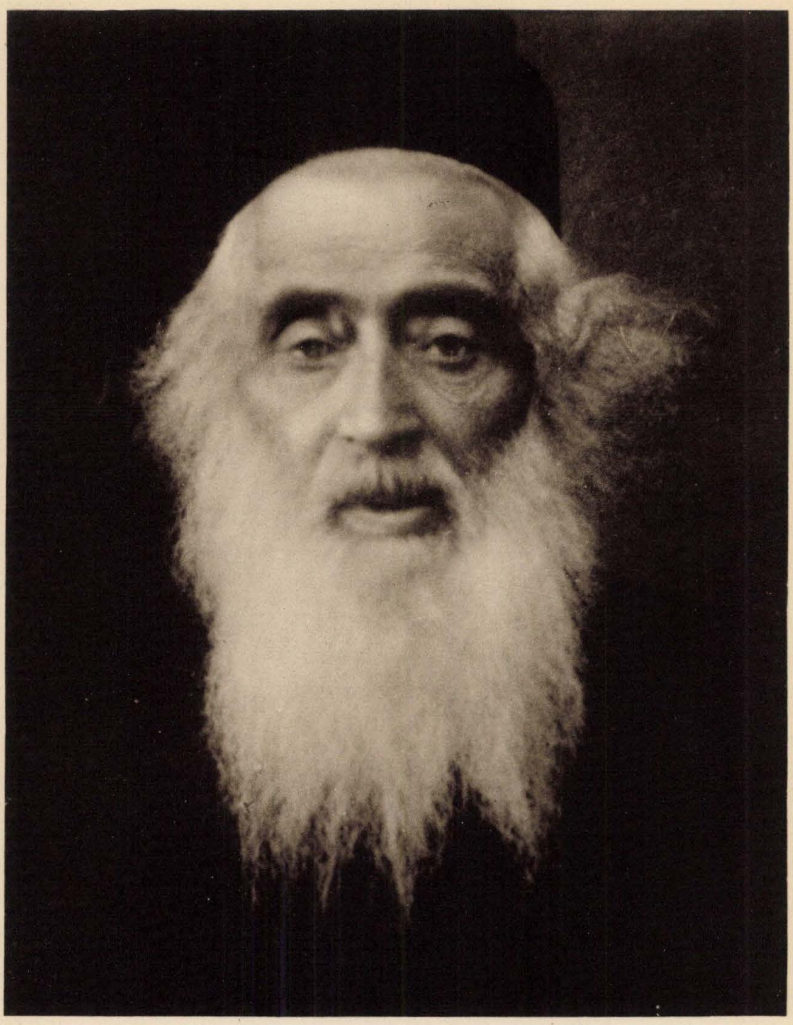
At the age of sixteen, as was the custom of the day, Moushe Samunov was betrothed to a gifted and very beautiful girl; he was sent to the Talmudic Academy for a year and upon his return at the age of seventeen he married.

The girl he was betrothed to, had a sister who was neither gifted nor attractive, she was in fact stupid and ugly; the father-in-law was obviously an unscrupulous fellow, he was actually a modern Laban and a cheat. After the wedding ceremony poor Moushe discovered that he had married the stupid and ugly sister. Being cheated of his beloved had a great psychological effect on Moushe. He was, says Dvore Traub, a brilliant man; as a result however, of this unfortunate marriage, he remained an embittered soul all his life.

Modern young people, or those unfamiliar with ancient customs, may wonder how it is possible for a groom to marry the wrong bride. The explanation for this is simple.

The ancient custom which, by the way, still prevails amongst the extremely orthodox, is to "cover"* the bride from head to shoulders privately, before the ceremony. The covering is usually with a silk shawl or a thick veil, and the ceremony of covering,

* See page 129. Vol. 3. Jewish Encyclopedia.



GERSHON MENDEL SAMUNOV

This photograph is part of a group taken in Libau, Latvia, in 1918

or veiling, known as " baddeken ", was always done by the mother of the bride, accompanied by her immediate friends.

It is obvious that those who covered that bride were in league with the bride's father, and though the uncovering has to be done under the canopy before the ceremony, those in league must certainly have so arranged it as to deceive the very young and inexperienced groom.

Gershon Mendel Samunov, son of Rabbi Mordecai and Sore married Channa (Kahn), and was engaged in business in Pilten, Latvia. He was a man of learning and culture and was highly esteemed by his Latvian neighbours. Kreine Behrman described a visit to Reb Gershon's house—the warehouse of agricultural machinery was immediately in front of the house and joined up to the drawing-or living-room, a very large room which during the week was used as a business office, frequented largely by Latvian peasantry, and usually full of pipe smoke, all the business being transacted in that particular room.

" The house itself ", says Kreine, " was low-roofed, hidden under dense creepers. The house, I repeat was low, but what high and lofty spirits and ideals, what real God-fearing people aboded there. It was a sheer joy to behold the transformation of that big common living room, used during the week for business purposes, as if a magic wand had been waved on a Friday night. Gone were the every-day business appurtenances, the smoke of the pipes, the land talk and laughter, and in their stead, the holy Sabbath, with the candle-sticks, the snow-white cloth, the ' Challes ', the silver Kiddush cup, the sweet chants about the Sabbath bride and the Zemiroth, all reigned supreme, something never to be forgotten ".

Gershon Mendel and Channa had five sons and two daughters, they were Rabbi Ephraem, Mordecai Aria, Tevye, Selig, Leibe, Chaie, and Rochel.

Rabbi Ephraem Samunov married Teme, a grand and elegant lady of noble family; she was the daughter of Rabbi Chaim Berlin, Rav of Moscow, and thus the grand-daughter of the famed ' Nazeb '. Rabbi Ephraem was firstly Rav of Yakobstadt and later Rav of Windau. Ephraem and Teme left three sons and one daughter; they are, Yitzchak, Yakov, Leib, and Rivke.

Leib Samunov and his three sons were unfortunately victims of the Nazis.

Yitzchak Samunov is married to Ida Vollshnock, they reside in Jerusalem.

Yakov Samunov is married to Dr. Sarah Alishevsky, they reside in Tel Aviv.

Rivke is married to Eliezer Halevy, they also reside in Israel, and have one son.

Ephraem Halevy.

In 1923, Rabbi Ephraem of pious memory, came to London on a visit to his children who were then residing there. During that visit the author was privileged to see the Rabbi; on one occasion the author was seated at dinner between Rabbi Ephraem and Dayan Hillman (Father-in-law of Dr. Isaac Herzog, Chief Rabbi of Israel). The brilliance of their conversation and the learned and apt spontaneous quotations, made an indelible impression upon the author. It was a delight and a privilege to listen to them. Rabbi Ephraem possessed a great charm of manner.

Mordecai Aria. Son of Gershon Mendel and Channa Samunov was a victim of the Nazis, he died childless.

Tevye. Son of Gershon Mendel and Channa Samunov, resides in the United States.

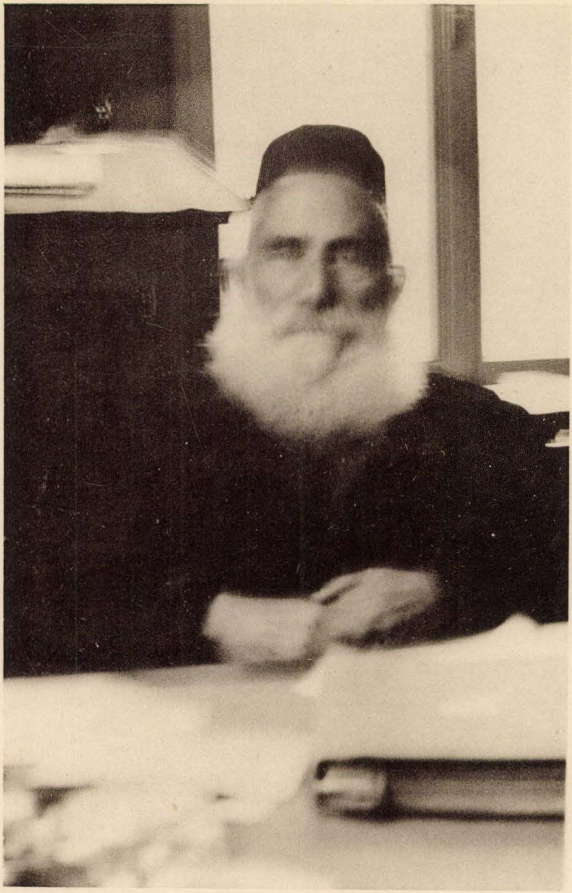
Selig. Son of Gershon Mendel and Channa Samunov, died in Riga before 1939. He has two bachelor sons residing in Tel Aviv. The rest of his family were victims of the Nazis.

Leibe. Son of Gershon Mendel and Channa, married his cousin, Frieda, daughter of Mere Leah. Both died in Russia; they left two sons, one was killed soldiering with the Russians, the other lives in São Paulo, Brazil.

Chaie. Daughter of Gershon Mendel and Channa, married Mr. Mesiwitzky of Libau, Latvia. Chaie had no children. She and her husband were victims of the Nazis.

Rochel. Daughter of Gershon Mendel and Channa, married Rabbiner. Her sons were victims of the Nazis. One of her daughters resides in Russia, another in Tel Aviv.

Rivke. Daughter of Rabbi Mordecai and Sore married her cousin, Shmuel Gershon Behrman. For details of this branch see Shmuel Gershon Behrman.



RABBI AARON MILEIKOWSKY-SAMUNOV

This photograph was taken by the Author in the Rabbi's Studio at Tel Aviv in 1934

Rabbi Elijah Aaron Mileikowsky-Samunov. Son of Rabbi Mordecai and Sore was firstly Rav of Grayeve and later Rav of Kharkov, Russia. In the middle twenties he moved to Israel and became Dayan* of Tel Aviv. He was the author of two learned books, " Dvar Eliyohu " and " Sefer Aharon ". In 1934, the author visited the Rabbi in Tel Aviv. The Rabbi fairly shook with emotion when shaking hands, and repeated the question several times " Dem Fetter Welfes An Einikel?", as if one had landed from another planet. He was noble in appearance and noble in character. He was married twice and died childless.

Mere Leah. Daughter of Rabbi Mordecai and Sore, married David Hirsh Klazov of Tukom, Latvia, and had one son and six daughters, as follows.

Dvore. Daughter of Mere Leah married Zvi Traub in 1892, a man of learning and culture, scion of generations of eminent Rabbis; Zvi Traub was the son of Rabbi Avrom Simon Rav of Kadan who was the author of an important work on " Halochas Gdoulas ".

The Traub family emanated from Frankfort-on-Main, where, in the Jewish Cemetery, there are Traub gravestones dating back to the 14th Century. Also, until the advent of Hitler, there was in Frankfort, a Traub Shull. Zvi Traub was born at Kadan Latvia in 1864, and with his wife and family moved from Latvia to Tel Aviv in 1925, where at the end of 1948, he passed away.

In a signed obituary, Yitzchak Raphael Halevy Hulzberg included an appreciation by the Chief Rabbi of Israel, Dr. Isaac Herzog, who speaks of Zvi Traub in terms of the highest praise. Zvi Traub was undoubtedly an outstanding personality.

His widow, Dvore, who is a mine of information on her branch of the family, resides at Tel Aviv, where she has two sons and two daughters

Israel Traub.
Zalmen Traub.
Chana Yaver.
Hinde Motelev.

* Rosh Beth Din.

Frieda, married her cousin Leib Samunov.

Chava, married Mr. Jacobson and resides in Riga, Latvia with two sons.

Minnie, married Mr. Rashall and died in Riga, childless.

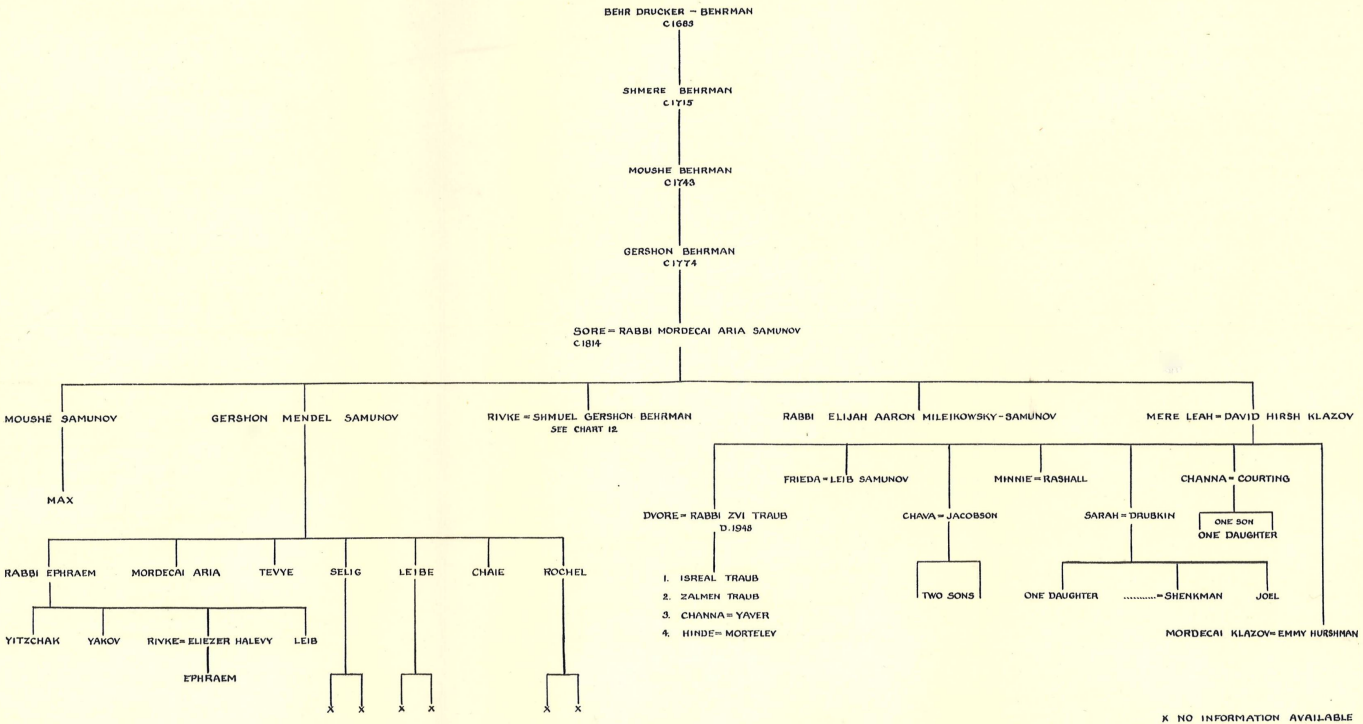
Sarah, married Mr. Drubkin and lived in Letland, where together with her father, one daughter and grand-daughter she was killed by the Nazis. Another daughter is married to Dr. Shenkman ; they have two children and reside in the U.S.A. Sarah's son Yoel resides in Riga, Latvia.

Channe, the youngest daughter married Mr. Courting, and has a son and a daughter. Channe and her husband reside in San Francisco, U.S.A.

Mordecai Klazov, son of Mere Leah, married Emmy Hurshman of Libau, Latvia.

The Author is indebted to Dvore Traub for much of the information in connection with this branch of the family. Genealogical details will be found on the accompanying Chart No. 27.

CHAPTER 27



X NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE

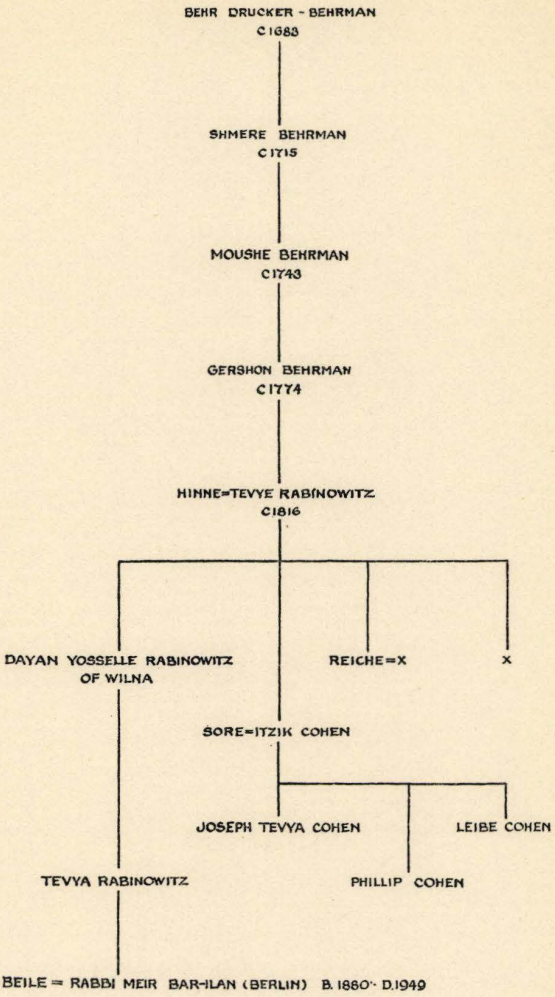


The Venerable and Eminent Rabbi Ephraem Samunov,
Rav of Windau, Latvia

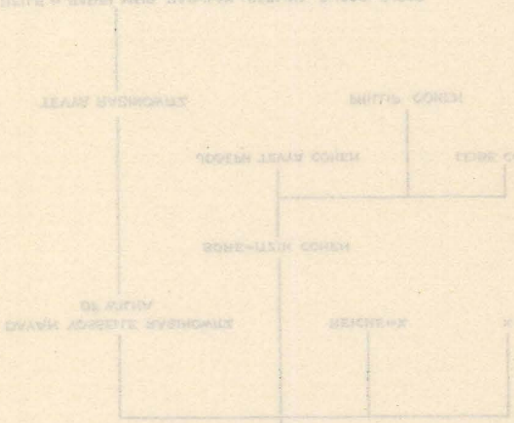
MEMORANDA

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CHAPTER 28



X NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE



28

HINNE RABINOWITZ.

Hinne, daughter of Gershon Behrman, married Tevye Rabinowitz; they had one son and three daughters. Their son Yosselle was a well known Dayan in Wilna.

A son of Dayan Yosselle, named after the Dayan's own father Tevye, was a prominent merchant in the town of Masaik, an important railway junction near Libau. Tevyes daughter, Beile Rabinowitz, married the eminent Rabbi Meir Berlin in the early part of this century. Rabbi Meir was, among other things, World President of the Mizrachi Organisation. He was the son of the " Nazeb " (mentioned in Chapter 11) by his second marriage.

It was announced in March 1949, that Rabbi Meir would henceforth be known as Bar-Ilan instead of Berlin. The Rabbi passed away on Sunday, April 19th, 1949 at his residence in Jerusalem where his children reside; his wife died previously.

The daughters of Hinne were Sore, Reiche and one of whom no information is available.

Reiche married and emigrated to Palestine.
Sore married Reb Itzik Cohen, senior shochet of Saad, Lithuania. They had three sons.

Joseph Tevye Cohen of Belfast, Ireland.
Reb Phillip Cohen of Glasgow, Scotland, a man of learning and piety.
Leibe Cohen who resides in Israel.

FEIGE MANDELSTAMM.

Feige, another daughter of Gershon Behrman, married Mr. Mandelstamm of Zager, Lithuania. The Mandelstamms were a very distinguished family, among them being Benjamin Mandelstamm, Hebraist and author; Leon Mandelstamm, poet and educationalist; and Max Mandelstamm, who was perhaps better known in more recent years as an eminent physician and active Zionist. Unfortunately, there are no available details of descendants.

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29

CHANNA MARK.

Channa, daughter of Gershon Behrman married the noted Talmudist, Reb Avremel Mark. They lived and died in Krottingen. Reb Avremel has been described as " a most erudite, cultured, handsome and refined gentleman ".

Reb Avremel was a descendant of the family of the Saintly Elijah, Gaon of Wilna, famed Talmudist, Cabbalist, grammarian and mathematician: (1720-1797, see Chapter 10).

There were five children of the marriage, Beresh, Hirsh, Leibe Eise, and Zipe, who married her mother's brother, Wolf Charles Behrman, and Chaie Sore, who married Yossel Drucker of Telz, Lithuania.

The elder son Beresh, was a particularly brilliant student. When he graduated the local Talmudic College, he was sent to Wilna to further his studies in the city's Talmudic Academy, one of the foremost in the region. As was the custom in those days, fathers with marriageable daughters kept a close look-out for brilliant young men, especially fathers who were of good economic position and were able to endow a prospective son-in-law with sufficient to enable him to further his studies.

Such a father, a " Chassid " of great wealth and prominence hailing from Dvinsk, appeared on the scene. He put his case before the principal of Wilna Academy and asked to be introduced to a likely candidate for the hand of his daughter. Beresh Mark was highly recommended, and after the usual preliminaries Beresh was invited to visit the home of the Chassid. The visit was obviously a great success, for not only did Beresh marry the Chassid's daughter, but, to the horror of his family, went a step further and embraced " chassidism ".

The gap between " Chassidim " and " Misnagdim ", was, in those days, very great and the family of Beresh were deeply grieved, so much so that they looked upon it as a 'conversion' and seriously considered 'sitting shiva' (seven days mourning as for the dead).

Beresh eventually became a well-known Chassidic Rabbi and was affectionately known to his followers as 'Rebbe Behrzig'. Many of his followers emigrated to the United States between eighteen ninety and the turn of the century; about 1900 Rabbi Beresh

received a ' call ' from a number of his followers who had settled in Rochester in the State of New York where he died in the twenties.

In 1918, the author visited Rabbi Beresh at Rochester, and though he was already well in the eighties, he possessed, nevertheless, all his faculties and was most keen to know about everyone in the family. His seven children and many grandchildren reside in the United States.

The following are the descendants of Channa (Reb Avremel) Mark. All of the children of Rabbi Beresh Mark, as well as Sarah Yudkin, the grand-daughter of Hirsh Mark, reside in the United States of America.

Hirsh Mark, four children.

Dora (Mrs. Nathan) Taylor.
Sarah Yudkin.

Abraham Mark.
Beatrice Bloom.

Rasha (Mrs. Gershon) Sussman.

Sarah (Mrs. Mayer) Zaitz.

Rabbi Beresh Mark, seven children.

Gershon Mark.

Harry.
Sarah Meltzer.
Molly Epstein.
Martin.
Aaron.
Ida.
Adele Geltner.

Chia Glickman.

Isidore.
Max.
Anne Erder.
Jeanette Greyer.
Evelyn Glickman.
Sylvia London.

Rose Kurtin.
Morris.
Harold.
Ruth White.
Sylvia Lewis.
Adele.

Miriam Safren.
Mike.
Louis.
George.
Sylvia Krine.
Anne Klein.

Celia Rogoff.
Edith Kurtin.
Sylvia Slonim.
Lilian Sara.
Isidore.
Aaron.

Bella Pearlman.
Anne Glickman.
Shirley Weiss.
Mike.
Abe.
Sydney.

Sarah Heller.

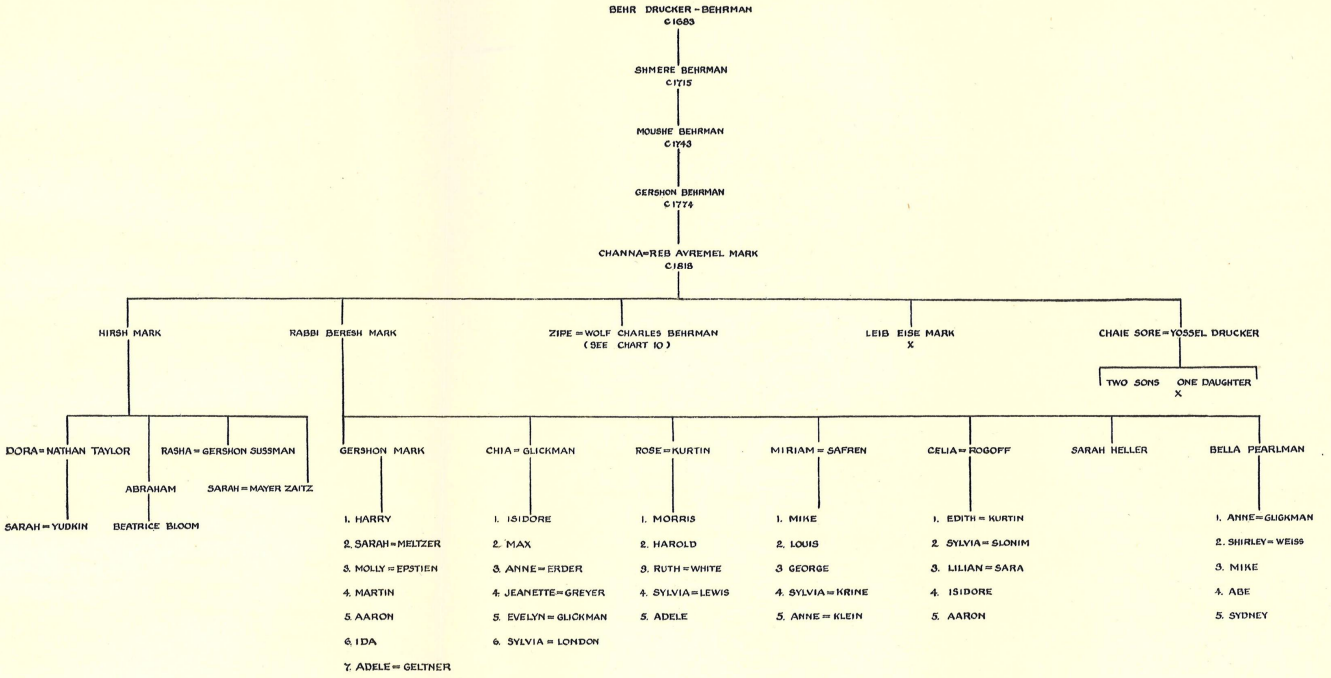
Zipe (Mrs. Wolf Charles) Behrman.
(See Wolf Charles Behrman).

Leibe Eise.—No details available.

Chaie Sore (Mrs. Yossel) Drucker.

Two sons.
One daughter. } No details available.

CHAPTER 29



X NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE

MEMORANDA

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30

ZIPE SUSSMAN.

Zipe, daughter of Gershon Behrman married Berrel Sussman of Krottingen. Berrel's brother Moushe changed his name to Berelson for political reasons. Moushe's son Yanke married Mary, daughter of Shmere Behrman.

Zipe and Berrel had a number of children, the one that is still remembered by a few and whose children settled in England is Feivel, commonly known in Krottingen and district as ' Feive Berrels '.

Feivel Sussman was a remarkable man; partially blind most of his life and almost totally blind towards his latter years, he carried on, nevertheless, a most successful business, practically single handed.

He was the largest cartage contractor in the neighbourhood and was the foremost government contractor. Though he had two sons, it was his daughters who acted as his guides and secretaries, each of the seven in turn until they married.

Feivel was held in the highest esteem by all who knew him, especially so by the government Officials who, from time to time, entrusted him with the transfer of vast sums of money from one military post to another.

One of the daughters of Zipe and Berrel Sussman married Yoel Krottinger, a well-to-do farmer and contractor.

A son of Yoel, Welfe Krottinger, resided in Krottingen. The author saw him there in 1923.

A daughter of Yoel, Zipe by name, married Shmuel Urdang, a native of Dorbyan. Shmuel and Zipe Urdang emigrated to Paterson, N.J., U.S.A., in the latter part of last century, where they both passed away. They left three daughters, and one son, all of whom reside in Paterson, N.J., U.S.A.

Rose (Mrs. Isaac) Hirshberg, (2 sons).
Eli (wife Esther) Hirshberg, (one son).
George.
Herman Hirshberg (wife Rosalin), (one daughter).
Betty Ellen.

Esther (Mrs. Nathan) Jacobs.

Jacob Urdang. (wife Fanny). two children.
Hellen.
Leon.

Minnie (first husband Sam Brower) Mrs. Philip Kalman.
Jerome S. Brower.
Milton J. Brower.

The issue of Feivel are the following:—

Behr Sussman. died in Johannesburg, South Africa, unmarried.

Gershon Sussman, died in London.

Zipe Olswang, three children.
Joseph Olswang, Liverpool, England; three children.
Edna.
Maurice.
Dulcie.
Olga Ellison, Glasgow, Scotland; two children.
Dr. Phillip Ellison.
Mr. Edward Ellison.
Ray Seff, Birmingham, England ; two children.
Sylvia Bernstein.
Zena Marks.

Channa (Mrs. Samuel) Behrman, Sunderland; two children.
George Behrman, Manchester, England.
Rosie (Mrs. David) Cohen, London; one daughter.
Pauline Cohen.

Pesse (Mrs. Phillip) Epstein, Birmingham, England; one son.
Dr. Alchonan Epstein, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
one son and one daughter.

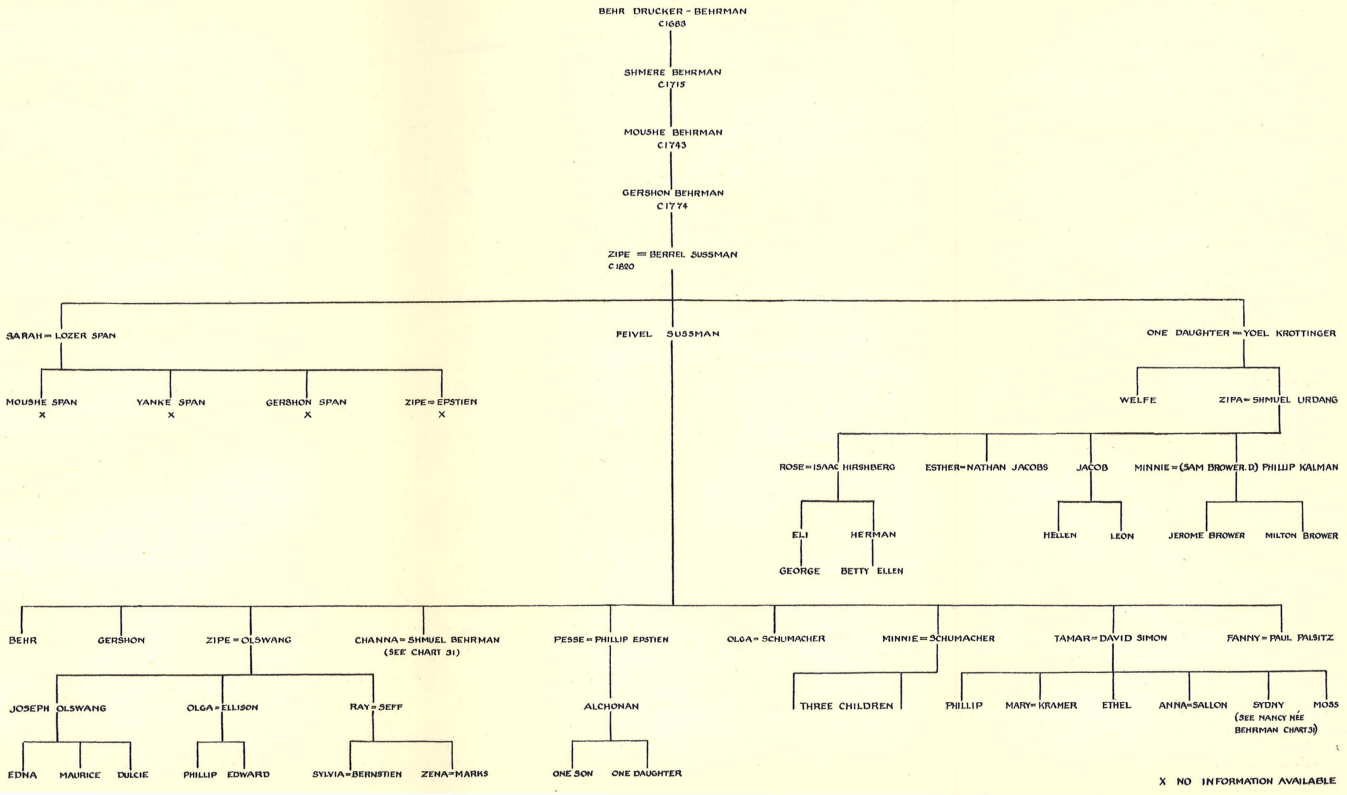
Olga Schumacher, died in Sunderland.

Minnie Schumacher;
Three children, all residing in New York, U.S.A.

Tamar (Mrs. David) Simon, Cardiff; children.
Dr. Phillip Simon, Cardiff.
Mary Kramer, Cardiff.
Ethel Simon, London.
Anna Sallon, London.
Sidney Simon, Birmingham.
Moss Simon, Cardiff.

Fanny (Feige) (Mrs. Paul) Palsitz, resides at São Paulo, Brazil.

CHAPTER 30



X NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE

SARAH SPAN.

Sarah was a daughter of Zipe Sussman, a grand-daughter of Gershon Behrman and the sister of Feive Sussman.

She married Lozer (Stalger) Span. They had three sons, Moushe, Yanke and Gershon, and a daughter Zipe whose married name was Epstein.

All of the above lived and died in Glasgow, Scotland, where they have many descendants.

MEMORANDA

MEMORANDA

31

SHMERE (GERSHONS) BEHRMAN.

Shmere was the youngest son of Gershon. He married Reise (Braude) who bore him four children, two sons and two daughters —Mary, Gershon, Minnie and Samuel.

Writing of Shmere Behrman, who was known to all the family, except his children and grandchildren, as ' Fetter ' Shmere, meaning Uncle Shmere, reminds one of a story connected with him.

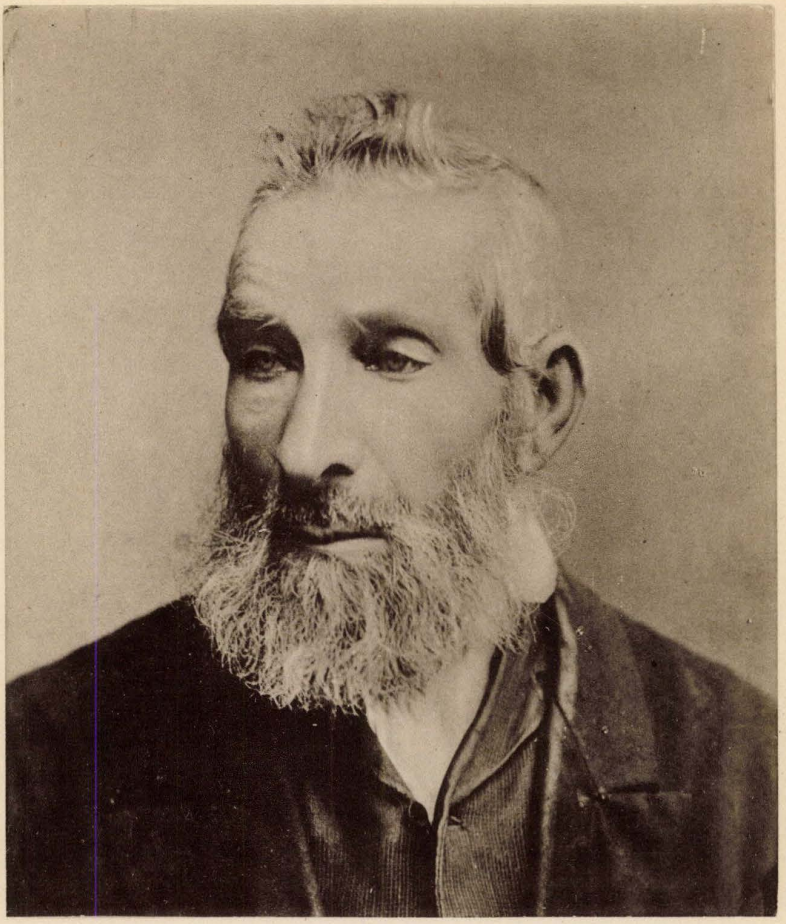
In the early eighteen nineties, Moushe Berlson, grandson of Shmere Behrman, was in charge of the Dorbyan Apothecary; this was a post of great importance in any of the towns in the neighbourhood, especially in Dorbyan, since that town had no resident doctor. The practitioner there was a ' Feldsher ', an unqualified ex-army field doctor.

At that time Uncle Shmere was not in the best of health; the Krottingen doctor prescribed, among other things, a little brandy now and then. This liquid was scarce, and as a result very expensive. Uncle Shmere could not afford it; Moushe Berlson therefore, undertook to provide the weekly ration.

The distance between Dorbyan and Krottingen is approximately eighteen miles. Postal service as we understand it, did not then exist in that part of the world; the road traffic however, for passengers, letters and goods, was frequent, often three times daily each way. The journey took about two and a half hours, depending on the type of horses employed and the state of the road. The vehicles were of rough and heavy type without springs, and the wheels were iron rimmed; in spite of that, the journey, particularly in the summer, was not unpleasant, because there was always a good bedding of straw to rest upon. There were, of course, no railways.

The men that operated the vehicles were of the highest integrity; they were frequently entrusted with the transfer of large sums of ready cash and other valuables, but, it was quite a different matter when whisky or brandy (Schnaps, as it was known) had to be transported. The safe arrival of this could only be guaranteed if a special messenger accompanied it; Moushe Berlson knew that, and therefore devised a scheme whereby his grandfather's brandy would be safely delivered without the need of a special messenger.

Berlson sent the brandy in a large medicine bottle to which was



SHMERE (GERSHONS) BEHRMAN
He was past eighty when this photograph was taken

attached an official looking prescription properly numbered and the following written upon it:—

'Ein Essloeffel dreimal taeglich'
(One table spoon three times a day).

The grandfather was, of course, made aware of this arrangement and all went well for the first three weeks. On the fourth week, the carrier reported that he had accidentally broken the bottle and offered to take another bottle without making the usual carrying charge. Berlson, however, had his suspicions and decided to put the man to a test.

He informed his grandfather that should a bottle reach him with such and such a number he must at once destroy it, at the same time informing the Feldsher of his plan and telling him to be ready for a 'call' at the carriers house. The next day Berlson handed the carrier a bottle that looked in every respect similar to the previous bottles, but this bottle contained a mixture strong enough to upset the stomach of a horse.

The day following that, the Feldsher reported that everything worked to plan, he was called to the carriers house at two in the morning; being prepared, he had with him the correct antidote, and except for a day in bed which he had ordered, the carrier was making rapid recovery.

The story soon leaked out, and henceforth Moushe Berlson had no difficulty in sending 'medicine' to his grandfather.

The last years of his life Fetter Shmere spent at the home of his son, Samuel Behrman, who at that time resided in Norfolk Street, Sunderland. Some months before he died, in 1901 at the age of eighty-four, he became very frail. Samuel and his wife Channa had two young children, Rosie and George. Consequently the young generation then in Sunderland, the grandchildren and grand nephews, the author among them, were mobilised for 'night duty', each had to give at least one night a week to look after the old man. It was during one of the nights when the author was on 'duty' that Fetter Shmere passed away, practically in the arms of the author.

His wife, 'the Mumme' (Aunt) Reise, had died in Krottingen some twelve years previously.

MARY BERLSON.

Mary, the oldest child, married Yankel Berlson of Libau, and died there in the middle eighteen nineties. She bore her husband two sons and several daughters.

GERSHON (SHMERES) BEHRMAN.

Gershon, the elder son of Shmere and Reise, married Dobe Beile Rosaitzky of Neustadt. Beile, by which name she was generally known in the family, was the daughter of a prominent merchant and man of learning. She was very good looking, her manner and bearing were stately, and she possessed a great presence. She bore her husband seven sons and one daughter.

Gershon, who was a handsome man, was beloved by everyone who knew him and was especially famed for his goodness of heart. When Gershon died suddenly in his early forties, his widow and children were left almost stranded. David, the eldest son, instead of going from Cheder to Yeshivah, as was the traditional custom of the family, had to immediately engage in business in order to help support the mother and children. As already mentioned economic conditions in Krottingen were at their worst in those days and as a result David went to South Africa.

Samuel, the second son, showed considerable brilliance and was for a time a student in the Yeshivah. He already possessed learning and culture when later he went to England to join his uncle, Samuel Behrman. Later still Samuel was joined by his brothers Ben and Charles. Eventually all three went to South Africa.

In the early part of the eighteen nineties, Mr. Gershon Levy sailed for South Africa and at Southampton he was joined by young Samuel, as well as by Alter Mann. Mr. Mann later became a very prominent man in Outshoorn, Natal, and, later still, represented Outshoorn in the Cape Parliament.

Leah, the only daughter of Gershon and Beile, possessed the good looks of both of her parents and the sweetness and goodness of heart of her father. She was beloved by all who knew her.

Leah married Mr. Solomon Krieger of Lygam and had three children; Sylvia, Rosie and Harry.

During the 1914/1918 war Leah and her children were evacuated to St. Petersburg (Leningrad). There Leah did a great deal of work to alleviate the sufferings of evacuees less fortunate than herself.

After the 1914/1918 war her husband died, followed shortly after

by her death. Their daughter Rosie married in Lithuania and had three children, but nothing has been heard of them since 1939, obviously victims of Hitler. Sylvia and Harry reside in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Max, Abe and Julius, the three younger sons of Gershon and Beile, came from Krottingen to Sunderland, Co. Durham. After some years there Abe joined his brothers in South Africa, but he returned in 1919 and now resides with his wife and family in Glasgow. Max and Julius are residents of Sunderland.

Beile lived to a comparatively ripe old age as the wife of Yankel Berlson, and died in Libau.

MINNIE HURWITZ.

Minnie, the younger daughter, was married in Pickeln, Lithuania, to Mr. Hurwitz; there she eventually died. Her four children—two sons and two daughters—with their father emigrated to Massachusetts, U.S.A., where the father and oldest son, George, died.

The oldest daughter married Mr. Barnet Cohen of Paterson, N.J. where Mr. Cohen died some years ago. The widow and children reside in Paterson.

SAMUEL (SHMERES) BEHRMAN.

Samuel Behrman was the youngest son of Shmere and Reise. He married his second cousin, Channa, who bore him two children —a son and a daughter.

Samuel and Channa were among the first of the family to emigrate to England where their children were born. Their economic circumstances were at no time very good, yet their house in Sunderland was the mecca for all the nephews, cousins, and even those who were of no relation at all. The hospitality of that house knew no bounds.

Samuel died in Sunderland in 1918, and Channa died there in 1939.

Their daughter, Rosie, is married to Mr. David Cohen of London, and they have one daughter—Pauline.

George, the son of Samuel and Channa, is married in Manchester, his wife's name being Dora.

Descendants of Gershon and Beile Behrman of Johannesburg, South Africa, are :—

David (wife Frede Heller)—two sons.

Harry George. (wife Blossom Morkovitz)—two daughters.
Nolleen.
Daphne.

Charles

Samuel (wife Minnie)—four children.
Hirsh Gershon, B.A., LL.B.
Moushe (wife Celia Davis)—two children.
Moira.
Cyril.

(Note—At the time of writing, Moushe, his wife and children are planning to emigrate to Israel. It is interesting to note here that had Samuel lived, he also would have settled in Israel, having visited there fifteen years ago.)

Taube (Mrs. Nathan) Friedman.
Beile (Mrs. Hymie) Kramer.

Ben (wife Lilly Lazarus)—one daughter.
Frieda (Dr. Joseph) Riesnick—three children.
Allen Michael.
Jean.
Leslie.

Charles (wife Kreine Behrman)—three children.
Jack Behrman, B.A., LL.B.
Horace (wife Sybil Slomowitz)—two daughters.
Shelly Martia (Sheine Masse) and Celeste.

Dorothy (Mrs. Theo) Rabinowitz—two children.
Stanley.
Mervin.

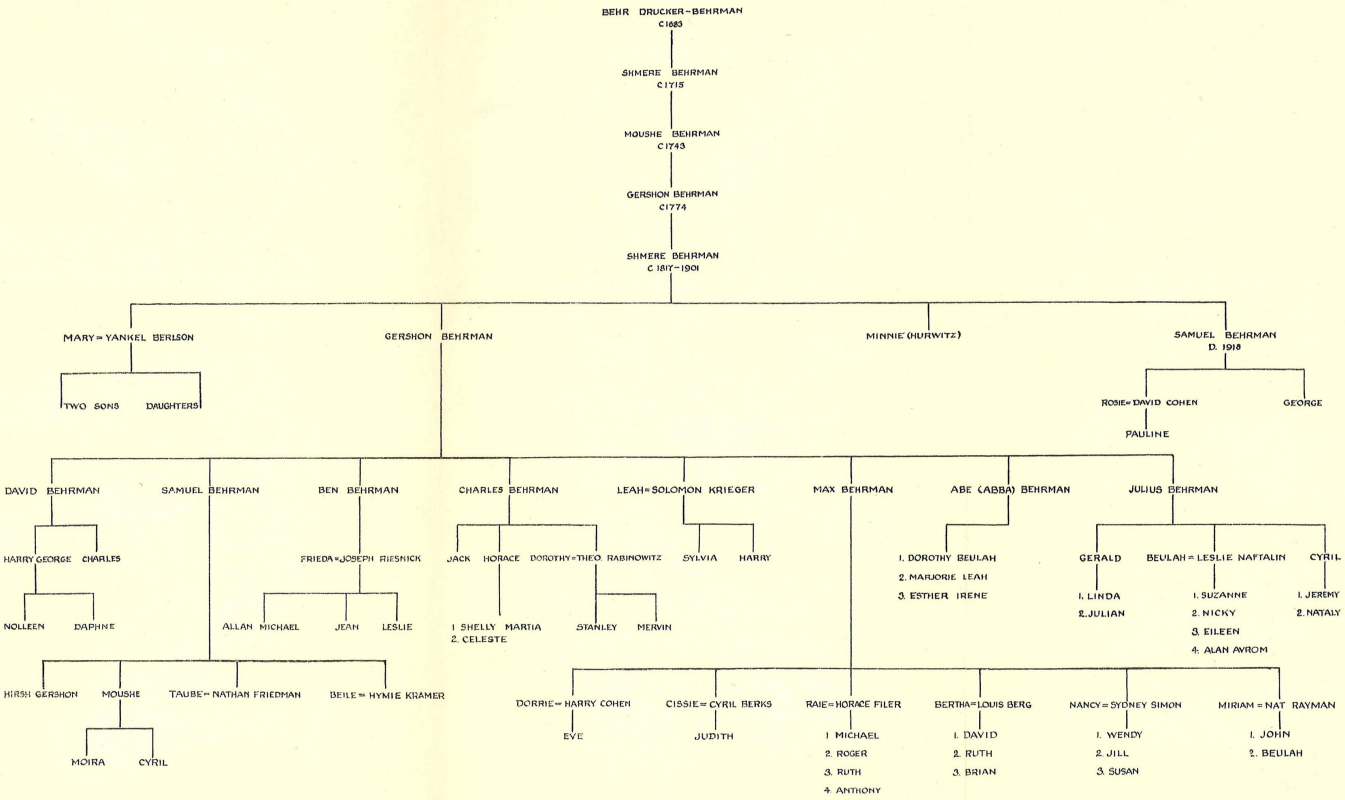
Leah (Mrs. Solomon) Krieger—her two surviving children who reside in South Africa are—
Sylvia.
Harry.

Descendants of Gershon and Beile Behrman who reside in Great Britain.

Max (wife Rose Bloom).
Dorrie (Mrs. Harry) Cohen.
Eve.

Cissie (Mrs. Cyril) Birks.
Judith.

CHAPTER 31


BEHR DRUCKER-BEHRMAN
C1683
SHMERE BEHRMAN
C1715
MOUSHE BEHRMAN
C1743
GERSHON BEHRMAN
C1774
SHMERE BEHRMAN
C 1817-1901
MARY = YANKEL BERLSON
TWO SONS
DAUGHTERS
GERSHON BEHRMAN
MINNIE (HURWITZ)
SAMUEL BEHRMAN
D. 1918
ROSIE = DAVID COHEN
GEORGE
PAULINE
DAVID BEHRMAN
HARRY
GEORGE
CHARLES
NOLLEEN
DAPHNE
SAMUEL BEHRMAN
HIRSH GERSHON
MOUSHE
MOIRA
CYRIL
TAUBE = NATHAN FRIEDMAN
BEILE = HYMIE KRAMER
BEN BEHRMAN
FRIEDA = JOSEPH RIESNICK
ALLAN
MICHAEL
JEAN
LESLIE
CHARLES BEHRMAN
JACK
HORACE
DOROTHY = THEO. RABINOWITZ
1 SHELLY
MARTIA
2. CELESTE
STANLEY
MERVIN
LEAH = SOLOMON KRIEGER
SYLVIA
HARRY
MAX BEHRMAN
DORRIE = HARRY COHEN
EVE
CISSIE = CYRIL BERKS
JUDITH
RAIE = HORACE FILER
1. MICHAEL
2. ROGER
3. RUTH
4. ANTHONY
ABE (ABBA) BEHRMAN
1. DOROTHY BEULAH
2. MARJORIE LEAH
3. ESTHER IRENE
BERTHA = LOUIS BERG
1. DAVID
2. RUTH
3. BRIAN
JULIUS BEHRMAN
GERALD
1. LINDA
2. JULIAN
BEULAH = LESLIE NAFTALIN
1. SUZANNE
2. NICKY
3. EILEEN
4. ALAN AVROM
CYRIL
1. JEREMY
2. NATALY
NANCY = SYDNEY SIMON
1. WENDY
2. JILL
3. SUSAN
MIRIAM = NAT RAYMAN
1. JOHN
2. BEULAH

Raie (Mrs. Horace) Filer.
Michael.
Roger.
Ruth.
Anthony.

Bertha (Mrs. Louis) Berg.
David.
Ruth.
Brian.

Nancie (Mrs. Sidney) Simon.
Wendy.
Jill.
Susan.

Miriam (Mrs. Nat) Rayman.
John.
Beulah.

Abe "Abba" (wife Ettie Naftalin).
Dorothy Beulah. (Note—Dorothy Beulah went to Israel in 1947 for a year's special study. She was there during the stormiest days of the war with the Arab States. At the time of writing, Dorothy lectures on Israel to Jewish youth groups in Britain; she anticipates settling in Israel in the near future.)

Marjorie Leah.
Esther Irene.

Julius (wife Rosie Richardson)
Gerald (wife Joan Ellenbogen).
Linda.
Julian.

Beulah (Dr. Leslie) Naftalin.
Suzanne.
Nicky.
Eileen.
Alan Avrom.

Cyril (wife Judith Cohen.)
Jeremy.
Nataly.

MEMORANDA

MEMORANDA

32

BAGENDORF, BERMAN AND BYRON.

Elsewhere mention is made of the fact that certain members of the family dropped the letter "H" from the name; others, however, have made more radical changes in the name, notably the Bagendorfs and the Byrons, though each did it for different reasons.

The dropping of the letter "H" by a few of the family took place in South Africa, where, it was claimed, the Boers found it less difficult to pronounce and spell without an "H" than with one.

In the more radical changes to Bagendorf and Byron, the reasons were perhaps more valid.

BAGENDORF.

Hirsh, the second son of Gershon Behrman was a " ne'er-do-well" dairy farmer near Libau, Latvia. In those days recruiting for the Czar's Army was on a percentage basis, that is, the bigger the family, the bigger the crop of recruits.

The Czar's Army offered very little attraction for anyone, least of all for Jews who were barred from the commissioned ranks, consequently, any dodge to escape military service was considered legitimate; not only by the Jews but likewise by the other minorities in the Baltic region, notably, Lithuanians, Latvians, Finns and Poles.

It was in order to escape military service that Hirsh changed his name to Bagendorf.

His grandchildren who reside in South Africa, however, have resumed the name of Behrman.

DESCENDANTS OF HIRSH BAGENDORF.

These are the children of Hirsh's son Leopold, residing in South Africa.

Mr. George Behrman.
Dr. Samuel Behrman.
Mr. Aubrey Behrman.
Rosie Hirschson (née Behrman).

Children of Hirsh's daughter Rahle Ziegler (née Bagendorf):—
Herman Ziegler—resides in New York.
Eli Ziegler—resides in New York.
Joseph (wife Vera) Ziegler reside in Johannesburg, South Africa, and have two children.

Hirsh's daughter Minnie Orkoff, originally from Riga, now resides somewhere in Russia. Minnie Orkoff has two sons and a daughter believed to reside in Israel.

BYRON.

The story of the change to Byron is a fascinating one and deserves retelling. Shmere Behrman was the youngest brother of Gershon and thus the uncle of Wolf Charles and Shmere Gershons; he was, however, of their age. In his early manhood Shmere visited, in the interest of his brother's business, many of the important neighbouring cities in Germany and Russia. Upon his return home he apparently found it difficult to adjust himself to the atmosphere of the comparatively small town of Krottingen.

Also, legend has it that during his absence the family had selected a would-be wife for him, doubtless an excellent choice, but Shmere apparently had other ideas about choosing a wife and in order to save family arguments he left home.

In this connection, as will be seen later, " history repeated itself ".

Shmere first lived in the Baltic provinces where he married and raised a family. Eventually he settled in St. Petersburg (Leningrad) where he became a prosperous merchant banker.

Among other children, he had two sons, David and Chaim. The ages of these boys were approximately those of their second cousins in Krottingen, namely Ore Hirshe, Yankel and Dvore Hinde, children of Wolf Charles Behrman, who, as mentioned elsewhere, employed first rate tutors for the religious and secular instruction of his children. Accordingly David and Chaim were sent to Krottingen, where, at the house of Wolf Charles, they, in company with their second cousins, received tuition in the traditional manner.

David was an ordinary pupil; Chaim, however, showed signs of brilliance and for him a scholastic future was foretold.

After graduating at Krottingen both boys returned to St. Petersburg, David entered his father's business and Chaim entered a higher school in preparation for University. David, who was a few years older than Chaim, married while Chaim was still at school; Chaim had no difficulty in gaining entrance at the University, in spite of the " quota " system which then prevailed. He was, however, only a year at the University when his parents suggested that he should get married, moreover, they selected a bride for him.

The idea of marriage did not then appeal to Chaim, much less did the lady of their selection; so, like his father before him in similar circumstances, he left home. Unlike his father, however, Chaim left no forwarding address; he vanished and was lost to family and friends. This was approximately in the year 1865.

The years slipped by, the parents died, David raised a family and became head of the firm. Chaim was lost and family and friends mourned for him.

In the eighteen-eighties the influx of emigrants in the United States was at its height; in New York where it was heaviest the education authorities started night schools for adults; in the nineties practically fifty per cent of the adult Jewish emigrants took advantage of them.

In 1895 there arrived in New York, Mr. and Mrs. David Kassel and family from Gorzd, Lithuania; they were close friends of and frequently visited Dvore Hinde in Paterson, N.J. Practically all the adults of this family attended night school. On one of their visits to Dvore Hinde they mentioned that the head master of their school, a German, or so they thought, Byron by name, hailed from the Memel district and when he learned that they came from Gorzd he became very solicitious about many families in the neighbouring towns, among them the Behrmans of Krottingen, who, he claimed were friends of his parents. The Kassel family had probably never heard of Chaim's disappearance, in any case, thirty years had elapsed; to Dvore Hinde, however, this clue meant something and like a flash she said, " Kinder, das ist Chaim Shmeres ".

When the Kassels heard the full story from Dvore Hinde, they became very interested and offered their help. Feige, Mrs. Kassel, suggested that they would invite Byron and Dvore Hinde for the same day; within a matter of weeks Dvore Hinde was asked to come to New York, and was told that Byron was also coming.

It was a warm Sunday afternoon and they sat on the verandah when Byron arrived. There was neither time nor need for formal introductions since Dvore Hinde could not control her emotions; the moment she spotted him she shouted " Chaim !" They embraced, and for some time, wept on each other's shoulder.

The " Chaim " story was one of the first of many which Dvore Hinde related to the author upon his arrival in New York in 1907.

In that year and the year following, the author saw a good deal of Henry Byron, for that was Chaim's adopted name, also his charming wife Nellie. Henry was likewise charming and very

cultured. He was the author of a little book of essays " A Day Dreamer's Harvest ".

Henry Byron's " journey " from St. Petersburg to New York was by no means " direct ". When he left home he went to Basel, Switzerland, where he entered the University; there he also met his wife. During his University years he did private tutoring and earned sufficient to keep him going. When he graduated he married and with his wife sailed for New York.

Being a man of culture and knowing several languages, he had no difficulty in obtaining a post as teacher, eventually becoming headmaster. He had assumed the name of " Henry Byron " as soon as he reached Switzerland.

When the news reached Krottingen of Dvore Hinde's "discovery" it created a great sensation, and endless letters came to Dvore Hinde asking for details.

Very shortly after the " discovery ", Henry Byron decided to visit Krottingen, or as near to it as he could get, and accordingly he went to Europe. He did not actually go to Krottingen itself, he went to Biyohren on the German side across the border from Krottingen. The reason for this was, that he did not, when he was twenty-one, report for military service, and, though more than thirty years had elapsed, he still feared the Russians.

Though there were not many of the family that remembered him, yet everybody visited him and he was most happy to talk to them all, descendants as they were of the boy and girl friends of his youth.

He stayed in Biyohren for several weeks and, according to Dvore Hinde, when he returned to America he looked and felt quite refreshed.

He continued to visit Dvore Hinde frequently, where he spent happy hours reminiscing of his youthful days in Krottingen.

Shortly after his visit to Biyohren, his brother David and family emigrated to America where he likewise assumed the name of Byron and was henceforth known as David Byron.

Several of David's sons were engaged in banking in the years 1907-1909, when the author knew them.

Henry Byron had no children and when he retired from school teaching he devoted himself to literature and shortly before the outbreak of the 1914-1918 war, he and his wife retired to Switzerland, where they both died some years after the war.

SHMERE (MOUSHES) BEHRMAN.

According to Kreine, Shmere (Moushes), father of David and Henry Byron had another son, Gershon, who was probably much older than either Henry or David. This son Gershon apparently had a large family of sons and daughters. One daughter, Hinde by name, married Schloumo Wolpe. The Wolpes had several daughters and one son; the son eventually married a lady from Libau. There was another daughter, a Mrs. Jaffe, in Kovno, and a further daughter, Ruba Bachrach, who was a famous beauty. Her husband first met her at a University lecture in St. Petersburg (Leningrad), and he fell instantly in love with her. The Bachrachs were prominent Bankers in St. Petersburg.



THE AUTHOR AND KREINE BEHRMAN

(Mr. and Mrs. Charles Behrman and their daughter Dorothy visited Britain in 1934; this photograph was taken at the Author's home at Hindhead, Surrey, on the 30th April, 1934, the day of their arrival in Britain)

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IN BRITAIN.

It may sound like fiction, it is nevertheless, a fact that, were it not for the accident of a former ' water boy ' employed by the household of Wolf Charles Behrman in Krottingen, members of the Behrman family might not have come to Britain when they did in the nineteenth century; and had they come, they would probably have gravitated to the capital instead of the provincial town of Sunderland in County Durham.

The story of the ' water boy ' was told to the author by the ' water boy ' himself in the early years of the century; he was Mr. Barnett Bernstein, a successful furniture manufacturer, who lived and died in Sunderland. Between 1900 and 1910 Barnett Bernstein spent most of his leisure hours at 30 Villiers Street, Sunderland, the residence of Gershon and Esther Reiche Levy. It was here that Mr. Bernstein talked constantly of his early life in Krottingen, his fourteen years in the army of the Czar and his early struggling years in Sunderland.

Bernstein was born in Krottingen about 1835, he was the son of the local carpenter and glazier whose name was Meier and who was known as " Meier the Disler ". At the age of ten he was engaged as ' water boy ', that is watering the horses and keeping the household supplied with water from the deep wells in the courtyard, at the household of Wolf Charles Behrman. At the age of fourteen he was ' shanghai'd ' to the army of Czar Nicholas of Russia; that meant enforced slavery for at least forty years.

Very few of the Jewish lads who were forcibly taken into the Russian army of those days managed to remain Jews, most of them succumbed to conversion; Bernstein, however, though not in practice, for that was impossible, remained a Jew in his heart and at the same time was a good soldier, so much so that after fourteen years of service he was given six months leave to visit his parents. It was during this visit, about 1863, that friends from the household of Wolf Charles helped him to get across the border to Germany. In Memel, passage was secured for him on a timber-laden sailing ship which was leaving for England, although neither he nor any of his friends appeared to know precisely the part of England to which it was sailing.

The ship was manned by Germans of the Hitler variety who had a thorough dislike for Jews and more especially " Ost Juden ",

and as a consequence poor Bernstein was, during the voyage, lowered in a net and 'ducked' in the North Sea on several occasions.

The ship finally landed in the Hartlepools, where a kindly Customs Officer escorted him to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Cassell of West Hartlepool, then the most prominent Jewish family in that town. The Cassells however, were absent from home; and after many signs and gesticulations, Bernstein understood that the Customs Officer suggested that he should sit on the doorstep until they returned. This he did and late that evening he was welcomed in to the Cassell household.

Bernstein was of fine physique and powerfully built, moreover, he had a good understanding of glazing; consequently Mr. Cassell provided him with a glazing crate, some tools and a little glass and told him to go down to the dock-side and enquire whether the ships required glazing done. No business was forthcoming and Bernstein kept on walking from, what appeared to him, one ship to another. At dusk he finally managed to get a job on a ship; he did not, however, realise that he had walked from West Hartlepool to the docks in Sunderland, a distance of some fifteen miles. He slept in Sunderland that night and the next day, he used up his stock of glass and required further supplies so that it was necessary for him to have an interpreter; a Jewish youngster who 'spotted' him came to his rescue and eventually took him home where he obtained board and lodgings. From then on Bernstein remained in Sunderland.

With his glazing he also did furniture repairs; he prospered, finally blossoming into a fully fledged furniture manufacturer. When he died in 1910 he left a considerable fortune.

From the very first, when he began to earn money, Bernstein sent a monthly sum to his parents in Krottingen. This good news spread quickly with the result that soon relatives began to arrive, notably, the Jacobs, the Olswangs, and many others, all of whom Bernstein befriended.

The first of the Behrman family whom Bernstein welcomed to Sunderland was Samuel Behrman who, shortly after, was joined by his wife Channa. Their house was the Mecca not only for the family but likewise for all " Landslite ".

In 1889 the town of Krottingen was practically destroyed by fire. At that time the Rev. A. A. Green, who subsequently became famed as an Anglo-Jewish preacher, had his first post as Minister

of the Sunderland Hebrew Congregation. By this time, there were already in Sunderland a considerable number of people who emanated from Krottingen and they established among themselves a fund for the relief of those who had suffered from the fire. The Rev. A. A. Green was sent to Krottingen to distribute the funds.

Note—The Abraham Cassell of West Hartlepool mentioned earlier, was the son of Zalmen Cassell of Memel and the grandfather of, among others, Alderman Ernest Bloom and Marcus Bloom, both former Mayors of West Hartlepool and of Rose, Mrs. Max Behrman.

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SUNDERLAND.

At the time of writing the Mayor of Sunderland is Alderman Jack Cohen, J.P.

It is interesting to note that the Mayor's grandfather, the late Mr. Charles Cohen, reached Sunderland from Krottingen in 1888. Mr. Charles Cohen, who was the author of " Yalkut Yechezkel " was reverently and affectionately known as " Reb Chatze ". He was a man of learning and piety and was very hospitable. One does not remember seeing him other than in silk hat, frock coat and umbrella; he looked stately and aristocratic.

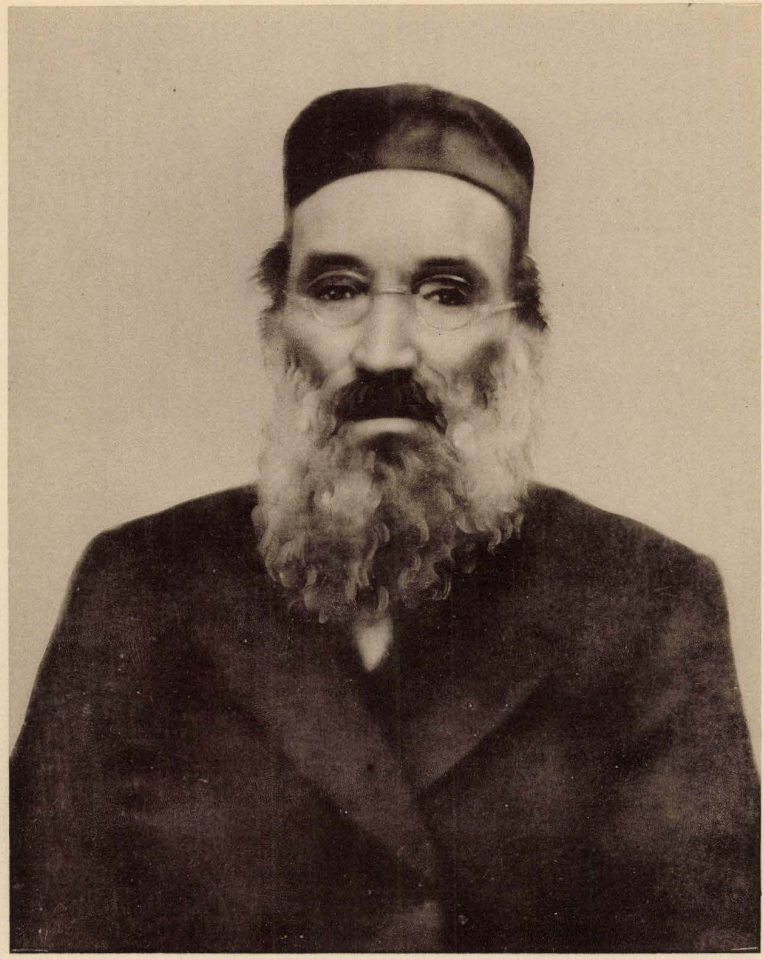
When Mr. Cohen reached Sunderland, the Hebrew Congregation had already been functioning for some years, but only for services for Friday nights, Saturdays and High Festivals. Moreover, the Synagogue did not possess any accommodation where men of learning could assemble for the purpose of learned discussions and debates. Mr. Cohen's first efforts to overcome this was to form the " Chevra Gemora " (Society for the Study of the Talmud), Mr. Cohen becoming the Honorary Lecturer.

A room in the home of Mr. Charles Gillis was loaned for that purpose, and this room gave birth to the " Sunderland Beth Hamedrash " which we know today.

Shortly after forming the " Beth Hamedrash " an eminent Rabbi in the person of Shmere Yitzchak Bloch, was appointed. Rabbi Bloch was himself a scion of a Krottingen house of learning, being the grandson of " Reb Aharon the Shochet " of Krottingen.

Very soon after, a Talmud Torah was established. The Sunderland Jewish Community has been particularly fortunate in its choice of eminent men as Rabbis. When Rabbi Bloch accepted a " call " to Birmingham, he was succeeded in Sunderland by the eminent Rabbi Hirsh Hurwitz, later Rabbi of Leeds.

At the same time, the Hebrew Congregation had two eminent Rabbis in succession, the brothers Daiches; first Rabbi Dr. Samuel Daiches ; after his appointment as lecturer at Jews College, he was followed to the Sunderland pulpit by his equally eminent brother, Rabbi Dr. Salis Daiches, later Chief Rabbi of Edinburgh. The office of President of the Sunderland Hebrew Congregation has frequently been held by native sons of Krottingen, notably Israel Jacobs and Simon Olswang.



"REB CHATZE", Mr. Charles Cohen, of Sunderland

This photograph is an enlargement of a "snap" taken by the Author at 52, Tatham Street, Sunderland, in July, 1919

More recently another son of Krottingen, Mr. Julius Behrman, was President of the Congregation for three successive terms. The now famed Gateshead Yeshiva, the largest in Europe, was actually planned in Sunderland, one of the founders being the late Gershon Levy.

It is a generally accepted fact that among provincial cities the Sunderland Jewish Community is above the average in learning and orthodoxy. This undoubtedly is due to a large extent to the influence of the pioneers from Krottingen, and the leadership of Reb "Chatze" Cohen and Reb Gershon Levy, Sichronom Tzadikim Livrocho.

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EARLY IMPRESSIONS.

After a period of fifty years it is not too easy to resuscitate many memories and impressions, yet some stand out as if they had taken place but yesterday; foremost among them is " Shalos Seudas "—the third meal, on the Sabbath.

Direct from Beth Hamedresh, after " Mincha ", the Balei Habatim would foregather at one of the two or three chosen homes to partake of light refreshments and to discuss the affairs of the day.

Between " Mincha " and " Maariv ", in dusk and later in darkness, one heard, in addition to " Divrei Torah ", many " gutte Werterlech " —the wise utterances of the great. Occasionally one heard the mention of some Russian name—probably a local official, usually followed with " Yimach Shmou ", no doubt he was a " Roshe ".

The hostess was kept busy bringing such delicacies as chopped herring on biscuits; the children present would receive sugared cookies which were munched in darkness, finally " MAARIV ". This was usually performed by one who was famed for his speed rather than Chazones, for most of the men were heavy smokers, eager for cigarettes. Immediately, therefore, Havdale was over, and the youngsters present had had a good sip of the raisin wine, cigarettes were passed round.

On a winter's day most adults would rush off to resume the business they left off on Friday. On a summer's Sabbath, however, the immediate affairs of the community would be taken in hand and thoroughly discussed. Had the Rav expressed an opinion about the Senior Shochet? Was the Shochet's hand sufficiently steady? Should not the Beth Hamedresh be whitewashed for the YOMIM NOROIM? The Senior Shames is getting old, there has been no burial of " Shaimos " for years, there is a great accumulation of " posselle tefilim " torn Seddurim and Chumoshim and old Talaisim, they must be dealt with before the whitewashing of the walls.

After some discussion a small committee would be appointed to acquaint the Rav with the physical state of the Beth Hamedresh and receive his sanction for the whitewash. For some unknown reason the Chazan was never discussed seriously, someone always had a pun or not unkindly joke about his Chazones.

In Chapter 15, mention is made that Yankel Behrman was for some years personal private secretary to " Reb Elye Krottinger ".

Seldom was there a conversation of any consequence without somebody or other, Yankel Behrman most of all, quoting a saying, or an appropriate remark, of " Reb Elye's ".

In communal discussions, one invariably heard " Reb Elye would have dealt with it thus ", and that, generally speaking, was final.

In the average community the Rav usually takes an important part in local communal politics; not so in Krottingen, at least not in the author's day; there were probably two reasons for this. Firstly, the lay leaders, or Balei Habatim were men of experience and integrity and had the confidence of the Rav and community. Secondly, the Rav of the day, Rabbi Leibzig Lipkin was far from being politically minded.

The Jewish Community of Krottingen had a population of less than two thousand; besides the Rav there was also a Dayan, affectionately known as " Der Rebbelle ". The generation that can remember the " Rebbelle " has unfortunately diminished, those that are left, however, will agree that he can best be described as a Saint.

The population at large hardly knew his name, it was always " The Rebbelle "; the Balei Habatim, however, spoke of him as the Dayan. Besides being of small stature, he had a very bad lisp and talked very fast; it was not easy therefore, to hold conversation with him, yet, he was not only ' understood ' by all, but he was also the most beloved and respected man in town.

The Houses of Prayer situated in " shull gass " were also the meeting places; these consisted of Beth Hamedresh, the Beth Haknesseth, known as " Shull ", the Old Klauz and the small Klauz.

The Beth Hamedresh was seldom closed, there the members of " Chevre Gemora " had their headquarters. The " Shull " was open on Sabbath and Yomim Tovim. " Chevre Mishna " was housed in the Old Klauz and those whose limits were " Sogen Tillim ", frequented the small Klauz, the members of which consisted chiefly of artisans.

It was to the artisans that "The Rebbelle " was host at his house on Saturday afternoons when he would provide them with tea.

The piety of the inhabitants and " The Rebbelle " most of all, can well be imagined, yet hot tea was available without having to desecrate the Sabbath.

At that period, Krottingen had neither gas nor electricity, coal was scarce and very expensive and was imported only by Count Tishkewitz, the ground landlord of the town who had a small

electricity generating station for use at his private park situated about two miles from town. Wood on the other hand, was plentiful and comparitively cheap; this therefore, constituted the fuel for all purposes.

The " Dutch " oven, brick built, then in use was so designed that, after cooking and baking on Fridays and removing the burning embers, the oven retained its heat for almost thirty-six hours.

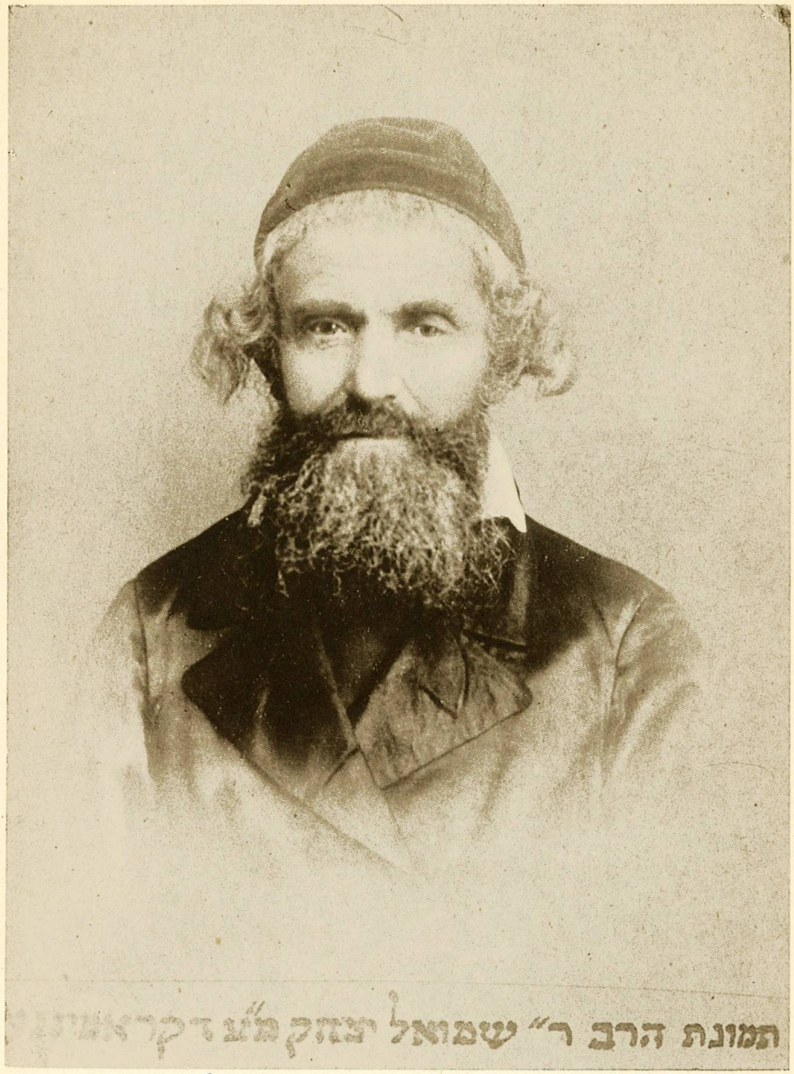
It was in the " Rher " or upper section of the oven where the Sabbath food, including large earthenware bottles known as " Bomples " filled with hot water, was kept hot. The tea itself was likewise prepared on Friday in precisely the way it is done today, except that it was made in a very large tea pot with a plentiful supply of tea, and after pouring boiling water over it, it was allowed to get cold. By the next day the tea had brewed itself into a strong essence or extract; a few drops of this essence with hot water from the " Bomples " made an excellent glass of tea, especially if served with a slice of lemon.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to convey an accurate picture of the Sabbath atmosphere prevalent in Krottingen at that period.

In chapter twenty-seven mention is made of the transformation, on Fridays, of the business premises of Gershon Mendel Samunov into a Sabbath atmosphere; that sort of transformation took place, in practically the whole town of Krottingen. It was especially amazing to watch this transformation when the " YERID " coincided with a Friday; the " YERID " was the quarterly market-fair which was of tremendous economic importance to the whole community.

It is perhaps understandable that a shopkeeper who had been waiting three months for the " Yerid ", though very pious, might be tempted, when his shop was full of customers, to keep open until the very last permitted moment; not so in Krottingen, the "Rebbelle" saw to that. That little saintly man would run from shop to shop warning them of the approach of the Sabbath, and everybody obeyed respectfully. More remarkable still was the respect shown him by the market stallholders, most of them from out of town and many rather rough ' customers ', yet upon the " Rebbelle's " approach they would fold their tents.

Sixty years ago, the " Krottinger " residing in Sunderland formed a " Rebbelle " Society, the membership fee being ONE PENNY per week, and though the " Rebbelle " received a meagre wage and was in fact poor, yet the moment he received the Sunderland money



KROTTINGER " REBBELLE ". DAYAN REB SHMUEL YITZCHAK HURWITZ
(*Circa* 1895)

he distributed it among the poor and needy of Krottingen. The accompanying photograph of Dayan Reb Shmuel Yitzchak Hurwitz, " The Rebbelle ", Sichrono Tzadik Livrocho, will doubtless revive memories with many of the author's generation.

A word must be said about the mid-day Sabbath meal, which, except for Yomim Tovim, was the most impressive of the week. The time for concluding the Sabbath morning services varied; the artisans who held services at the Klauzen began earlier and usually concluded about 11 a.m. The Beth Hamedresh and Shull had more ceremonial by way of " Chazones " and concluded about 12 noon, except of course when there were Bar Mitzvahs or wedding parties, on which occasions the portion of the week was usually ' stretched ' for the calling-up of the Machetonim, and the service would be concluded about 1 p.m. Also on these occasions, one was usually invited to the house of the Baal Simcha to partake in ' Brocho ', in which case the mid-day meal did not begin until 2 p.m.; the time taken over this meal was about two hours, half of this time being taken up with the chanting of Zemiroth and Bentshen.

The main dish of that meal was the ' Tscholent ', consisting of meat, vegetables, fruits and spices. The Tscholent required slow cooking at a fairly high temperature, and in order to insure that there was no escape of heat, the door of the ' Rher ' of the oven previously described, was sealed with loam. The ' Shabbas Goy ' knew that the seal was to be broken when the head of the family returned from Shull.

The most sought after dish by children, as well as by many grown-ups, was the ' Kugel '. This dish was a steamed pudding with a very good supply of raisins and syrup and was made in an earthenware vessel the shape of a flower pot; this, like the ' Tscholent ', was kept hot in the ' Rher ' and was served as the sweet at the Sabbath mid-day meal. The eating of the ' Tscholent ' and ' Kugel ' on the Sabbath, became almost a religious rite with Jewry of the north and east.

Earlier in this chapter mention is made of the fact that the Rav of Krottingen of that period, Rabbi Leibzig Lipkin, was not politically minded; that indeed is an understatement. One had but to look at the man to see that his mind was far from things material or political. The Lipkins are an eminent family of Lithuanian Rabbis, scholars, mathematicians, astronomers and leaders in Jewry (Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. XIII, pages 95-97). The most eminent, undoubtedly, was Reb Yisroel Salanter Lipkin, so named as he

resided at Salant. Reb Yisroel was an uncle of Rabbi Leibzig Lipkin, Rav of Krottingen.

The nearest blood relations in England of Rabbi Leibzig are the children of Rabbi Hirsh Ferber of London; the late Mrs. Ferber was a niece of the Rabbi. To Rabbi Ferber therefore, we are indebted for a few intimate details of Rabbi Leibzig Lipkin, sichrono tzadik livrocho.

Leibzig Lipkin showed signs of genius as a young boy; as a young man he was already recognised as a tzadik and ish kodoush and was thoroughly versed in the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmud as well as in Kabbalistic writings. Shortly after his marriage to his cousin he accepted a call from Popelan where he was Rabbi for about a year, when he was called to Krottingen where he was Rav for twenty-five years.

It is related that a Jewish student of mathematics at the Warsaw University, who was about to sit for his final examinations, was advised by his non-Jewish Professor to spend some time in the company of Reb Leibzig. This the student did, and passed with honours.

Reb Leibzig was the author of a number of books which dealt with Talmud, Kabbala, Higher Mathematics and Astronomy. He left with his son-in-law, Rabbi Zalman Levitus, eighteen unpublished manuscripts. Unfortunately, Rabbi Zalman and family were victims of the Nazis, and with them the manuscripts were lost.

From the above, it will be seen that Rabbi Leibzig was hardly the man to take an interest in the daily humdrum of communal affairs, yet, his very presence in Krottingen was an influence for the greatest good, even on the author's generation who were very young when he passed away in 1902 at the age of 63. Because of men of his type the very atmosphere and life of Krottingen was geared to a high moral and spiritual level.

In Krottingen fifty years ago, Reb Aharon Yach, of pious memory, was the Senior Shochet, and, so to speak, was third in succession. That is to say, in the event of the absence or indisposition of the Rav and Dayan, Reb Aharon would be called upon to take charge. Reb Aharon was an outstandingly handsome man, well over six feet tall, built in proportion, and with a long flowing beard. The beard was already white in the author's day.

Being a " Talmud Chochom " he was naturally a pillar of " Chevra Gemore ". He was treated with the greatest respect and veneration by the " Balei Habatim " and the community at large, as was also

his son Sholem, the Junior Shochet, who eventually succeeded him.

In the previous chapter, mention is made of the fact that Reb Aharon's grandson, Rabbi Shmere Yitzchak Bloch, was the first Rav of the Sunderland Beth Hamedresh; there are many of Reb Aharon's descendents in the British Isles and elsewhere, many of them " Klei Koudesh ".

And so we leave the cradle of our early impressions, in the words of Tennyson, ' wild with all regret '.

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ISRAEL.

The previous chapter was written within a few months of the creation of the Independent State of Israel, and having regard to the immensity of this historic event, one may be forgiven for making mention of it, even though this book does not previously deal with this subject.

Few Jews with feeling can refrain from wonderment at the miracles that have taken place, and many more will be grateful and thankful for the privilege of having been able to witness them.

In the chapter on Gershon Levy mention is made of the fact that David Wolffsohn, the man who succeeded Dr. Herzl, was a native of Dorbyan; Wolffsohn, however, was not the only " Dorbyanner " who devoted years of energy and fortune to the cause of Zionism, though, of course, he was in the hierarchy of the movement. Three that come to mind, all first cousins of Gershon Levy are Herman Aronowitz, happily still with us, Sigismund Rubinstein of Wilna and his brother, Saul Rubinstein, one of the Tel Aviv pioneers.

In his autobiography " Trial and Error ", the President of Israel, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, devoted comparatively little space to Dr. Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism; consequently we cannot wonder that David Wolffsohn is hardly mentioned. The fact remains, nevertheless, that David Wolffsohn, native of Dorbyan, Lithuania, stepped into the breach at a most critical time and carried on for many years as successor to Dr. Herzl, holding the Zionist movement together at great cost to health and fortune. Of this there is ample confirmation from those who were on the scene at the time.

Professor Richard Gorttheil of Columbia University, New York, published his book " Zionism " in 1914. (Jewish Publication Society). Discussing the opposition that developed after Herzl's death, (page 153), the Professor says ;

> " 1904–1911, when the Zionist organisation was under the leadership of David Wolffsohn, who had taken the ungracious task upon his shoulders of heading the movement in the most critical period in its development, they had made rapid strides. Wolffsohn's efforts were largely expended—and necessarily so—in healing the many breaches made in its walls."

Those best able to judge, notably Sir Leon Simon, C.B. (" Jewish Chronicle " 2/4/49), Mr. Harry Sacher (" Manchester Guardian " 31/3/49), and Mr. Israel Cohen (" New Statesman and Nation " 2/4/49), each in his own way, more or less, agrees that Dr. Weizmann has done less than justice to the work of Dr. Herzl and his colleagues; or as Mr. Sacher puts it: " Some of his—Dr. Weizmann's—judgments of his fellow workers,—Herzl, Sokolow, Wolffsohn—call for qualification ".

In certain Israeli quarters today it appears fashionable to speak of David Wolffsohn as " The Timber Merchant of Cologne ", which he was ; he was, however, much more than that.

The truth is that we are altogether too close to the very tremendous recent events to estimate adequately the value of Wolffsohn's work and policies; future historians, however, will undoubtedly place in its proper perspective the importance of the work of the Zionist leaders of the last half century, and if one may venture a prophecy, full credit will be given to the important work that was done by David Wolffsohn, of Dorbyan.

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